## Christmas, 1860.

A happy Christmas-tide to every one!
Though from the festal board some guests are gone,
And yet not gone, for to each vacant place
There cometh one who hath an angel's face!
And there is left a store of life and love,
Links which unite us here to those above.

A happy Christmas-tide! And let the poor
Turn with a thankful heart from eb'ry door.
If in our hearts there's strife with kin or friend,
For Jesu's sake, let the contention end.
So, ere the year is hidden 'neath its pall,
Thank we the Lord, to be at peace with all.

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# TO CHRISTINA.

## A CONFESSION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE SHADOW IN THE HOUSE."

Christmas Eve, Midnight.

NE person alone, besides my mother, knows what I am now going to tell you. If I could speak to you on such a theme I would not commit to paper the records of my shame. Burn these sheets when you have read them. I have been sufficiently punished; do not let me risk the danger of my future being again compromised by their existence.

Yesterday, the twenty-third day of December, I, Paul Hayden, was sitting at my desk in the counting-house of Messrs. Klop, Son, and Klop, foreign merchants. There was a good deal to do during the evening, as we were accustomed on the day of Christmas Eve to break up early. Every footstep that crossed the counting-house or moved in the outer office seemed light and elastic, and had a kind of enjoyable frosty creak in its sound. There was a something in the pure air of the night, and in the anticipations of the coming festival, which completely changed the aspect of affairs in the ordinarily dull atmosphere of the counting-house, making grim old "senior" clerks light and frisky, and young "junior" clerks staid and painstaking, as they saw that a little hard work now alone interposed between them and the coming revels.

As for me, I sat there with my pen in my hand, and the ledger open before me, bowed down by such a weight of shame and self-reproach as I had never dreamed of falling to my lot. There were my fellow-workmen moving about light-hearted and hopeful; there was I with ruin—almost certain ruin—staring me in the face. Once I felt as in a dream; but no: there lay the letter before me, and I took it up and read it once again:—

"Dear old Fellow,—Codd won't renew the bill on any terms. What's to be done? If something is not thought of, and quickly too, you'll see him at Klop's to-morrow morning, sure as fate. I'm deucedly sorry for you, but I can't help you: not the remotest chance of that. Turn it over in your mind. I'll be on the bridge as you go home.

"Yours ever, "ARTHUR GLYNNE."

Turn it over! And what good would that do? How was a poor fellow like me to scrape together a hundred pounds? Yes, my dear friend, Arthur Glynne, who had so kindly introduced me to all the delights of London, initiated me in all its tempting mysteries, paid for me, quarrelled with me if I remonstrated against his liberality, and laughed at me if I tried to withdraw from such a life of flowery degradation, this all-bountiful friend had suddenly come down upon me one month before with a request (that my obligations had made irresistible) that I would accept for him a bill of a hundred pounds, and leave him to provide for it when due. I am sure he had meant to fulfil his promise. But Fortune did not hold Arthur Glynne in such deep respect as to trouble herself in the least about giving him the means of fulfilling his obligation; and so I was left in the lurch.

What was I to do? The first sight of that bill would in Mr. Klop's eyes have been about the same thing as the last sight of me. And if I left him in disgrace there was an end to my mercantile career. Should I confide the whole to my mother,—which meant, should I let her know what a recklessly-profligate life I had been leading since our arrival in London, and my meeting with Glynne? Should I open to her the vista of my recent experience during the secret hours of night? Should I dash to the ground the hopes she was fondly nursing of my advancement?

Despairing of any solution, I determined to meet Glynne and tell him so.

I shut up the ledger, put it away in its place, and proceeded to exchange my office-coat for my walking one.

"Going, Mr. Hayden?" inquired our cashier, Mr. Sampson Boyce, who did not, I fancied, at all participate in the slight signs of satisfaction that Mr. Klop had occasionally exhibited towards me.

"Yes, Sir; good night," I answered as I went out.

I hurried along the noisy streets, with their glaring Christmas-lighted shops, gliding like a spectre through the crowds, never slackening my pace till I reached the foot of the bridge, when a thought struck me, as with a blow of paralysis: I had left Glynne's letter in my office-coat! With moist and trembling hands, which I vainly tried to keep steady, I searched my pockets over and over, then began to run back, but again stopped, incredulously, to make sure. It was too true; I had left it behind; might even have dropped it on the floor while changing coats. I hurried back to the office. The door to the counting-house was down a little court or archway. I tried it. It was locked. I went round to the dwelling-house, determined that nothing less than sheer impossibility should prevent my getting back my letter. I knew the way into the counting-house from Mr. Klop's house, and that if I could only escape notice from the domestics first, and then from the cashier, and Denning, the watchman, there would be no one else likely to see me. At the worst, I could ask permission to go through to the office. I was fortunate — the street-door was open. I slipped through the passage, and was safely in the business premises. Through the glass door of Denning's little room I saw Mr. Boyce reading a newspaper. So, then, he had done with the business of the office, and was probably just going. I heard Denning's footstep moving heavily to and fro in the storeroom above. I walked cautiously along the passage till I came to the counting-house. The door was open. I went in, glancing hurriedly about on the floor, but seeing nothing of my letter. The first touch of the pockets of my office-coat told me it was not there. I turned the pockets inside out. No, there was no letter in them. Had Boyce found it accidentally, or Mr. Klop, or had some one suspected me, and searched my coat when I went away? The suspense was intolerable. Suddenly I remembered that on one occasion I had slipped the letter between the pages of the ledger when Mr. Boyce had appeared at the door; but I felt almost certain that I had not left it there. I took down the ledger, however, and with a bounding heart saw the missing sheet drop to the ground. For a moment I felt rather as though my troubles were gone, than that their mere exposure was delayed, as I tore up Gwynne's letter, and consumed the pieces by the single gas-lamp that was left burning low till the watchman came for his last survey. As I turned to find my way back I heard Denning coming down stairs. "Well," I thought, "if he comes in I will tell him I passed through the house, without meeting any one, to fetch something I had left behind; but if he passes on I will not unnecessarily make him aware of my presence." He did pass on, and presently I heard him descending the stairs to the underground storeroom.

As I stood there listening, where I had then no right to be, no wonder I felt like a criminal, and that strange and unpleasant thoughts should begin to pass through my mind. Dark, vague suggestions, the true nature of which I shrank from grappling with, began to stir me; and I felt as if my hair were lifted in horror. I gazed cautiously round. I believe I had at that moment no defined idea beyond the simple one of seeking security from the apprehension that some one might have seen me enter and burn the letter—nay, might even now be watching me. Anxiously I gazed around. Behind, through the glass door of the counting-house, I could see all over and through the large office, with its shadowy-looking rows of desks and stools, made dimly visible by the low, smouldering kind of light. Before me was Mr. Klop's private room. The door was left ajar. Was he there? No, all was silent! But I must make sure. I pushed the door back, and was startled by the flood of moonlight in which I was suddenly plunged. I advanced, half-believing that I was simply fascinated by the splendid natural and artificial scene beyond which was visible through the broad window. There was a piece of the great black city spread out, low and far, in the vivid, frosty moonlight; the glittering river curving amid blackened buildings; the arches of the bridges almost changing from semicircles to circles by the junction of bridge and reflection below; and a sky of glassy blue, thickly crowded with stars, each apparently emulous to outshine its neighbour in size and brilliancy, and draw to itself every wandering earthly eye. That end of the room was light enough to see to read. I could discern the spots of ink upon the floor. I could see the brass-work of the iron safe. I could see—what? Yes, I write to confess, not to evade, my guilt. I could see, Christina, a something that made my heart throb with violence, even while I knew well enough there had been in it a feeling of roused expectation, as though I had been led there by friend or foe, for some purpose which I should not long mistake. My hand, as I looked, dropped on the neighbouring desk for support to my frame. Yet I did not turn away, as I ought to have done, either in pure innocence of heart, or with a sense that I had in thought sinned for a moment, but had fled in horror from the temptation, to repent, and to be warned ever after of the danger of one moment of criminal weakness. No; I continued to gaze as in a kind of hideous fascination. It seemed to me not a simple key in that lock, but the curving finger of some demon that I was bound to obey. "Pay the price of your enjoyments now," I thought I heard it saying to me. "Fool! you cannot escape, or, if you can, this is the only way. Show some courage, some manliness—do boldly what must be done! If it will be any comfort to you, we'll say this shall be the only time. Ay, swear it if you like! Am I not here to register your oath? We understand. Only this once!"

Still I moved not—only helplessly gazed. My ears now became filled with other sounds and voices. I heard Mr. Klop dismissing me, amid the contemptuous and indignant murmurs of the clerks. I felt the touch of arrest on my shoulder, and the low murmur in the ear implying that my very body was become the property of another. I heard the heartbroken cry of my mother as the double news of my imprisonment and dismissal reached her. And still the Demon beckoned me, as though these were all but tributary influences which he had evoked to show me how useless and unmanly was my hesitation. That curved, shining finger (so strangely lifelike in its form under the moonlight's partial gleam) drew me towards it, and I heard its voice saying, "Come! It is the only way. Hasten! Save yourself!" "No! Fly! It is ruin!" cried another and opposing voice. And then it too murmured, like an echo, "Save yourself!"

But that last voice was so small, and so far off, and the previous one so loud and near—and then that beckoning finger was so easy to touch, and promised so much of instant advantage from its mystery, that even as I gazed, incapable to determine what I would do, *I had done all*—committed myself to that from which life will never again allow me to be dissevered.

Spare me, Christina, for an instant. I will go on again calmly soon, if you can feel interest in me any longer.

Well, I resume:—The cold steel, as I touched it, sent a shiver through my frame, but I turned the key with a desperate hand, opened the door, and looked in. I could just dimly see a drawer full of gold; my first touch was of a batch of filmy, rustling paper—all bank-notes. I took out two, and held one of them up to the light of the moon. I could just make out the word "Hundred," and was about to put the others back and hurry away, when my Familiar whispered me, "Fool! you will never prosper in this mode of life if you begin so badly. What good will that do you? Where can you change it? Take gold!" Hastily I replaced the notes on the heap, and plunged my hand into the drawer where the gold was, trying to guess as well as I could how far such a handful would go towards a hundred sovereigns. And here let me laugh at a delicate piece of casuistry with which I amused myself. Even then I could not, I thought, take one sovereign more than my indispensable need required. O, not for the wealth of worlds! Pity my employer had not been by to recognise as it deserved such sublime self-abnegation! So I counted the gold, tremulously, yet determinedly, to the end of the hundred, perfectly conscious that every second thus spent was enhancing my danger, but also conscious that I was laying up one bit of comfortable hypocrisy for the future that might be found very necessary for my peace.

The gold was mine. My bill should be duly honoured. "Honoured!" O God, how my own word pierced me like an ill-carried weapon! Paha! These were trifles now. I groped my way out of the room and along the passage; saw Joyce, still over his newspaper, in Denning's room; staggered out by the way I had entered; opened silently the street-door, which had been closed since I had passed through; and then, unchallenged by a single voice, slunk away by dark courts and by-passages to keep my appointment.

I reached the bridge. I leant against the wall. I tried to realise a single moment of joy at my success—the success for which I had bid so high a price. "I am saved!" I cried inwardly; "saved!" Just then I heard a sound that shook my very soul. It was but a church clock across the river, striking; but to me it was like a voice crying through the midnight, "Lost!" And immediately one clock after another took up the sound, until it seemed to me that angel voices—some thrillingly sweet, some mournful and beseeching, some solemn and denouncing—were crying to me from all parts of the universe, "Lost! lost! lost!" The river, the black city, faded from my view beneath that glorious sky. I saw an old village, every spot of which was familiar to me. I seemed to stand no longer on that bridge, but was kneeling in a well-known room, with my face raised to that sky in prayer. I clasped my hands, my lips moved. I had a delicious feeling of rest. Once more I was a little child going to lie down in my bed without a care. I heard a footstep; gradually as it approached nearer it recalled me to myself—myself! Good God! was that poor, miserable, shrinking being Paul Hayden? That——!

Spare me yet, Christina, one weakness. Do not ask me to brand myself once more with the word; it has burnt in too deeply, and needs rather anodynes and rest. Yes, spare me now and for ever the word. I know I cannot escape the thing.

What should I do? Again came that perilous question. How had I answered it before? The weight in my pockets, heavy enough to drag down a thousand souls, was my answer. I thought once I would leap into the river, and let that weight bear me down to a grave so deep that I might hope there to be insensible even to my shame. Then my clenched hands would rise convulsively and desperately in mortal agony against my breast, asking again, "What shall I do?"

Knowing not, seeing no path open to go back, yet shrinking more and more every moment from the thought of going forward, I suddenly—obeying some impulse I hardly understood, perhaps one of desire for physical relief—began to run. Presently I fancied I caught a glimpse of Glynne approaching to meet me. I turned and ran in an opposite direction to that of his coming footsteps; it seemed to me as though I were flying not so much from him as from myself—from the new and hideous form I had taken—knowing not yet which would prove to be the true Paul Hayden.

When I stopped running it was in the court outside the office. How I came there I know not, unless drawn by the same power that I have heard often moves murderers to haunt the spot where they shed the blood of their victim, and where they are at length to find the ministers of retribution.

"Is it too late?" I asked, under my breath, sinking down on some steps in a dark corner near the counting-house. "Is it too late even now to right myself? Yes! it is impossible—hopeless!" Thus I despairingly cried; but the hope grew and grew until it became a strong, yearning, passionate desire to try. If that gold were only back again how light every other trouble would be—how quietly I could go home and sleep! I rose from the steps filled with a wild, feverish resolution. "I will do it, so God help me!" I cried, and went round to the front door. It was locked. O the misery of that moment! I wrung my hands in silent despair and went back to the court. I glanced eagerly at the three lower windows on that side. The one nearest the steps was open—wide open—left so, perhaps, for a few moments, by the watchman, in order to sweeten the offices after putting out the gas. But, if so, he was not far off. He would probably see me if I ventured. Well, I must risk that. By ascending the steps I fancied I could reach it. It was soon done, my arm stretched across, the window-sill grasped, and I had pulled myself up and dropped lightly inside. I looked through the counting-house door. As far as I could see, everything remained as when I had left it; no one was there. I went in, opened the safe, and with trembling hand put back the hated gold, trying to let it mingle with the rest without noise. O how anxiously I searched my pockets to be sure that not one solitary piece was left behind by accident! It gave me a fresh alarm the mere thought. With a more grateful sound than before the key turned in the lock, and I groped my way from the room and gained the window without hearing the slightest noise to disturb me. Once out in the cold night again, my only feeling was to get away as fast as I could. Then came blessed relief—my heart was brimful of intense thankfulness.

As I was walking rapidly across the bridge, some one slapped me on the shoulder. I looked round, saw it was Glynne, and shrunk from him, perhaps rather roughly; if so, the roughness was not intentional.

"What's the matter now?" said he. "Why, Hayden, you've been drinking. It was a fool's trick to get yourself in this state just now. I suppose you had better go home, and I'll come and see you before breakfast. Only it's driving it desperately close."

"Look here, Glynne; answer me this. Have you any notion of what you have paid for me since I have been in London?"

"Pooh! you don't know what you're talking about."

"I beg your pardon, I do. Can you answer me?"

"Well, I should rather fancy not. How on earth should I know?"

"Would that bill be about it?

"Humbug! What's the good of asking me? Yes, more."

"Very well, then. That I take into my own hands. From this day I owe you nothing. Good night!" I held out my hand. As he took it, I said:—

"Don't let's meet again, Glynne, not at present; I don't care if we never do."

He drew himself up, stared at me, took his cigar from his lips, laughed a low forced laugh, turned lightly on his heel, and walked away.

I went home; sorry to have so parted, but glad of the parting itself, and too weak myself to dream of strengthening him.

I sat down by the fireside with the miserable task before me of telling my mother about the bill, but I felt it was the only thing to save her as well as myself from disgrace. She was more cheerful than I had seen her for some time, but her first words were most unwelcome to me in my present condition.

"Christina is in London, Paul. She will perhaps be here to-morrow."

This was indeed an unpleasant surprise to me—she who had known me as I once was—she coming to witness my disgrace. That decided me. I must tell my mother all about it. In a few words I prepared for the worst, and then told her all—*all*, Christina.

When I had said what I had to say from beginning to end, my head dropped on her shoulder, and relief, indescribable relief, was mine. For some time we were both silent. At length she spoke:—

"Paul, you know what my property is—five hundred pounds I will pay your bill. But, O my boy, do not deceive me! Tell me the worst. Will Mr. Klop, indeed, find that hundred pounds there that you say"—— She did not need to finish the sentence. I understood her but too well. After the revelation I had made she had no longer faith in me or in my word. My act was already pursuing me—here, where I thought myself most safe. I rudely pushed her away, and hurried to my bed, at once stung by her doubts and terrified by the new alarm she had conjured up. As I weighed it, an almost superstitious dread possessed me that her words betokened some further consequence yet undreamed of by me. "What if it should not be there!" I cried out in my anguish; "who would then believe me, if she does not?" I spent a terrible night. When I lay awake the darkness seemed full of beckoning, shining, fingers, in the shape of keys; when I slept I dreamed I was dropping from some enormous height, or flying across some interminable bridge. In the pale, wintry, dawn of morning I rose. I started to meet my own face in the glass. It spoke truly; I *had* grown years older during that night.

I would not trust myself to meet my mother at breakfast, and left the house without seeing her. By the time I had arrived at the office

I felt unable to look any one in the face. As I turned my back to hang up my coat, I said, as usual, "Good morning, gentlemen."

I listened breathlessly. My hand paused with the uplifted coat. No, there was no answer; there was not a sound in the room but the scratching of pens. I looked round. This was folly. Every one was quietly engaged in work. My own voice must have died away before it left me. I had nothing but myself and my own fears to be afraid of.

I tried hard to work, but my ears involuntarily strove to catch every sound, every whisper. The sight of that safe, which I could see from where I sat, when the door was open, turned me sick. I could not help watching Boyce eagerly as he went to open it. What if I had displaced anything and he should notice it? He opened it. There was no immediate intimation, by his manner, that he saw anything wrong till he began counting, and then I fancied he must be puzzled, he was so long and silent. I wondered; yet what was it to me—what could it be—whether his accounts were right or wrong? There was clearly no trace of my visit left behind. Yet I could not rest. I started at the least sound, and when I saw Mr. Klop's shining bald head and silver hair approaching my heart jumped violently.

"Now, Mr. Boyce," he said, sitting down at the great fire, "I'll just run through the cash balance with you, if you're ready."

"Certainly, sir, certainly," said Mr. Boyce; "I have just a little matter to finish with first; then I'll come to you." So saying, he left the office.

Mr. Klop sat rubbing his hands at the fire waiting for him. Some minutes passed without his return. Mr. Klop looked impatiently once towards the door. Still he came not. At length Mr. Klop rose, went to the outer office, and called,

"Mr. Boyce!"

"He has gone out, Sir," said one of the clerks.

"Gone out!" cried Mr. Klop, "Why, what can have induced him to go out just as I told him I wanted him?"

He went back impatiently into his room.

Every circumstance, however slight, now oppressed me. What did Boyce's absence mean? Had he gone to fetch a constable before even letting Mr. Klop know he had cause for suspicion?

No—no; there was a something in the cashier's manner that I could not read in that way. There seemed almost a kind of new and sympathetic tie between us, which made me shudder, in that aspect and manner of his.

And then, trying to relapse into the thoughts of my safety, and of Christina, and of my mother—and of that dinner I was to eat by Mr. Klop's hearth in the evening—I felt there hung over me yet a kind of imposture. I was not what I seemed, and might for that reason be again tempted by those secret influences that seem to lie in wait for such prey. I had been all the morning weighing over a certain idea, alarming to dwell on, requiring more courage to pursue than I dared dream of possessing, dismissed many times, yet always coming back—"Paul, Paul, do not eat that dinner; go not *there* while you remain *thus*. Take heart; you know what you ought to do. Go, while it is certain there is time."

My knees knocked together, my lips seemed glued, my fingers like those of a dead man, as I slipped from my stool, strode to the mantelpiece, and drank off a whole glass of water before going up to Mr. Klop's door. I tapped, and, without waiting for an answer, walked straight into his room. I suppose I tried to speak at first, and that he did not hear me, for he said impatiently—

"Speak louder, Paul. What is it?"

"I should like to speak to you, Sir, in private."

"Eh! Oh, certainly." He got up, came past me, and closed the door; then reseated himself. I began to speak, desirous naturally to make the best of so bad a job, but the tones were unsteady, and I could only get out words enough to show the bare dry truth, without the slightest circumlocution or colouring.

"Sir, I had a letter last night telling me I should be arrested to-day for a debt of a hundred pounds. I left that letter here accidentally, and, fearing you or some one might find it, I returned. I saw your room open, your key in the safe: I robbed you of a hundred pounds."

I stopped, for my voice grew more and more hoarse and unsteady, and my heart was beating with frenzied violence.

"Well?" said Mr. Klop, eyeing me sternly.

"I could not keep it, Sir. I climbed in at the lower passage-window opening into the court, and put it back. You will find it there. My life is a burden to me with this untold."

"Is this true, young man?—And the whole truth?"

"All! on my soul, Sir."

Mr. Klop rose, passed by me to the door, opened it, and called out, "Has Mr. Boyce returned?"

"Yes, Sir," answered one of the clerks.

Mr. Boyce now presented himself, bathed in perspiration, and breathless, which he vainly strove to conceal under the guise of his ordinarily quiet, almost sullen, behaviour.

"A customer, Sir, drew me out while talking. And I forgot to say there is a gentleman outside asking to see you on particular and pressing business. He is watching for some one to pass. He said he must go if you did not see him instantly."

"Let him go then, and to the Devil if he likes! Now, Mr. Boyce, just look to the cash, and see if it's all right. I left my key in the safe last night, and should like to be satisfied that nothing wrong has happened in consequence."

"Yes, Sir;"—and Mr. Boyce looked strangely irresolute as he came in, glancing uneasily behind him, yet warned by Mr. Klop's searching eye, which was becoming decidedly unpleasant.

Mr. Boyce went to the safe, opened it, and drew the iron door towards him—perhaps accidentally—but it would have had the effect of concealing the upper part of his body from us where we stood, only that Mr. Klop moved a little—and that, too, might have been accidentally—and then the door was almost ostentatiously thrown back.

A pause of a minute or two now ensued. Presently Mr. Boyce said, with a quivering voice, quite unlike his usual harsh, unfeeling tone, "Why, why, Sir! Mr. Klop, some one has been here! There is I believe—nay, I am sure—a hundred pounds missing! Stay; I will count again." And he did so, not turning for a moment to look on us.

Our eyes met—Mr. Klop's and mine. It was an awful meeting. He doubted me—that was the expression I saw there. I answered him with a quiet but steady look, earnestly yet mutely appealing. He understood, I thought, and waited.

As for me, however calmly I was able to bear myself, I saw there was a frightful gulf yawning beneath my feet.

Very rapidly I ran over all the possibilities of this new calamity—retraced every foot of ground, and every minute of time, belonging to the sickening experience of the past night. I saw but one solution—too fantastic to be credible, yet the only one my agitated mind could guess at and rest upon. Was Boyce a rogue? Had he seen me either steal into Mr. Klop's room last night, or out of it when he was reading the paper in Denning's room? Had he secretly gone after me to the safe, discovered the theft, and, instead of denouncing it, determined to profit by it, sure that the thief would be made answerable for all, and disbelieved even if discovered, and if he should deny that he had taken more than the one hundred pounds? If so, one thing was clear—he would sacrifice me to clear himself.

"Yes, Sir," he said, now turning round upon us a face whiter—so it seemed to me—than the whitest of sepulchral walls, "there is a hundred pounds missing."

"And can you, Boyce, guess how?"

"Well, Sir, that is a serious question to answer. I fear I can. Last night, when every one was gone, I thought I saw a shadow pass the little window of Denning's place. It was gone before I could get out. I looked into your room here, but saw nothing in particular to alarm me."

"Not the key in the safe?"

"No, Sir, I did not notice it."

"Indeed!" said the merchant, "and did you notice anything?"

"I did, Sir. I picked up this on the floor."

He produced a crumpled playbill. As he opened it, I saw in large letters "Don Giovanni." I knew it. It indicated the latest of the many visits Glynne and I had made together to the Opera.

"Do you know who could have dropped it?"

"I will answer that question, Sir," said I. "I have no doubt I did, if it was really found there."

"*If* it was? Would you dare, Sir, to suspect Mr. Sampson Boyce, the cashier of Klop, Son, and Klop, of an untruth? uttered, too, for the ruin of another? Young man, beware! *This* is no play," said Mr. Klop, with a strange gleam in his eye.

I trembled, yet looked up with a certain confidence. God help me, I felt almost innocent just then. Mr. Klop's eye passed from Boyce to me, from me to Boyce, before he again spoke.

"Well, Mr. Boyce, I and Paul have already had some talk: he knows he is under suspicion. By-the-by, who was the customer, Mr. Boyce, that took you into the street a little while ago—kept you so long, and sent you back in such hot haste?"

There was the slightest possible pause.

"I really don't know his name, Sir. I have seen him in the warehouse over and over again, but cannot remember to have ever heard it."

"And when you came back, who was the gentleman who wanted me so pressingly to come out?" said Mr. Klop, with that inexplicable gleam once more in his quiet, dangerous-looking eye.

Mr. Boyce attempted a smile: a very ghastly one it was.

"He neither gave me his name or card, Sir."

"And he said nothing particular to you, except that he wanted me out there?"

"Nothing, Sir."

"Not even that you must get me out of this room at any cost, or you would never be able to replace that hundred pounds out of your pocket, and which you had been home to fetch? Eh?"

Dead silence. I seemed (but it might be fancy) to hear the shaking of the clothes on that collapsing frame.

"Come, Mr. Boyce, enough of this! If I wrong you I will beg your pardon, as a gentleman should, and show you why I came to this abrupt conclusion. Now, Sir, have you not that money in your pocket?"

What a position was mine! To stand there and see this man's guilt strangely and wonderfully brought to light through my guilt, and to know he was every instant getting more hopelessly entangled, and I feeling more and more free, in spite of my inward prayer to God to prepare me for the worst.

Suddenly he threw himself on his knees before Mr. Klop, and murmured, just above his breath, "Forgive me! It is true. I was tempted. I saw the key in your safe—discovered, as I thought, you had been robbed. I am sure, Sir, there *was* a hundred pounds taken away."

"I could have told you that."

"Indeed, Sir! It was you, then? I am rightly punished! I thought you had been robbed—saw in the playbill a trace of the criminal—and felt assured that if I increased the amount no suspicion would ever attach to me. Mercy!"

"It would be wasted. I can understand a moment of weakness leading to crime in a young, tempted, and inexperienced man; and that the act itself may bring its own warning and cure. But you, Sir, must be corrupt at heart—must have through life fenced yourself round with lies, and have been only unexpectedly surprised into a true self-revelation. Go! I have no more to say."

A few minutes more and I saw two constables enter, and the gold taken from Boyce's pockets, which he had evidently determined to restore the moment he had, or fancied that he had, discovered no theft had been committed, but had been denied all opportunity. Without a word more he left the room in the custody of the men.

I sank down in a chair, heedless of Mr. Klop's presence, my very soul faint.

"Young man," he said to me soon, and in a voice so strangely sweet that the tears bounded forth to greet it, "you have sinned, repented, and made prompt restitution. You can do no more now. I wish it had been otherwise. But I forgive you. In time I may be able to trust you if you deserve it."

He would not turn me off then. O God! that I might have shown him what I felt! But I restrained myself, and I have no doubt he liked me the better for so doing.

"Paul, no one knows but myself. No one shall know."

I could only look and bow, in silent gratitude.

"You will dine with me, as you had intended?"

"No, no, Sir."

"Why? It will divert suspicion."

"Oh, Sir, my heart is too full. God forgive me; it would seem a kind of triumph."

"You are right. Go at once. I will look to the affair of the bill, and see how to help you, without altogether sheltering you from your just responsibilities. Good-by; give me your hand; pleasant Christmas to you!"

Christina, I have told all to my mother. I cannot eat to-morrow's dinner till I have also told you. Now, if you wish it, I release you from your engagement. PAUL.

Let the last of these pages bear witness that I will never comply with the request made in them; never will I burn them, never will I part with them, never shall eye see them while we two live. When we are dead, the revelation under other names will not matter to us, and may help those who are in danger. CHRISTINA.

CHARADE.—No. 11.

Whenever Dame Martin her troublesome spouse
With his labour finds out he plays "booty,"
She flies to my First in my Second to rouse
The skulker to some sense of duty;
And ofttimes she vows, "if he hasn't more grace,
His conduct will drive her, for sartin,
To do something rash—that my Whole will take place
As sure as her name's "Betty Martin,"

## CAPITAL OFFENCES ONLY PARDONABLE AT CHRISTMAS-TIME.

WHY is a chimneysweep who dislikes a pot of beer like a starch-producing vegetable?—Because he is a pot-hater.

WHAT animal most resembles a bad Frenchman?—A cellar-rat (*scelerat*).

WHY is the Pope's headdress like a half-day on the treadmill?—Because it is a tirer (*Don't you see? a tiara!*).

WHEN is a river like a costermonger's cart?—When there is a-n-eddy in it.

WHY is a returned bill like a guinea-fowl?—Because it is a come-back.

IF an egg were questioned about its parentage, what preserve would it most likely name?—Mar-me-laid.

WHAT tree is the properest to put into a bank?—Acacia. (*Can't you call it a cashier?*)

WHAT cat is like a large abbey?—A grey tabby (*a great abbey*).

WHY is a hatter like a valuer of goods?—Because he's a nap-raiser (*an appraiser*).

WHY is a stoker on a railway-engine like another preparing breakfast?—Because he gets his steam aid (*his tea made*) by hot water.

CAN you name the greatest corngrowers in Europe and America?—Yes—tight boots.

WHY has a digger down a pit,
When he in two his spade has split,
A clearance with his landlord made?—
Why, don't you see? He's rent his spade—
(*His rent is paid*).

IF Astley's Theatre should change its name, what public building should it be named after?—Summerset House.

IN trying to make a contract, what do you mean by a "sealed tender"?—A love-letter.

WHEN is a barrister like a squirrel in a cage?—When he's going the circuit.

WHY should an undertaker always smoke?—Because tobacco-smoke is generally a coughing-maker.

WHY is a lawyer's life a lazy one?—Because it's a life of fees (*a life of ease*).

WHY is a Lord Mayor like talking nonsense to a sensible man?—Because he goes in at one (y)ear and out at the other.

WHY is a spirit obeying the summons of table-rapping Mrs. Marshall like the Ghost in "Hamlet"?

"See where it comes, with Martial stalk" (*Marshall's talk*).
*Shakspeare.*

WHERE should birds go in the cherry season?—To Peckham.

HOW do people look when they are engaged?—They look contracted.

## CHARADES.

No. 12.

Fair Annie with my Second wastes
My First three times a day;
Nor heeds my Whole, which silently
Reproves the vain display.

No. 13.

Without my First OUR BACON had not been;
My Second once on baby's eye was seen;
My Whole united in a word will tell
The happy home wherein my First doth dwell.

No. 14.

My Second of good ale or wine
Contains two of my First,
Yet Tom can carry off my Whole,
And neither reel nor burst.

No. 15.

I am a thing of commerce,
Substantial and no bubble,
Yet, take away my capital,
You make my value double.

No. 16.

You may call my First *bon*, and my Second as good;
And my Whole you would share with dear Kate if you could.

No. 17.

Oft at my First my Second has occurred
When noisy sots have had what's called "a word;"
And on my Whole some new Æneas might
Have borne his sire Anchises from the fight.

No. 18.

My First is found in every tanner's yard;
My Second cockney snobs pronounce as hard.
If with my Whole we were just now supplied,
We'd drink "Wacshael" this happy Christmas-tide.

No. 19.

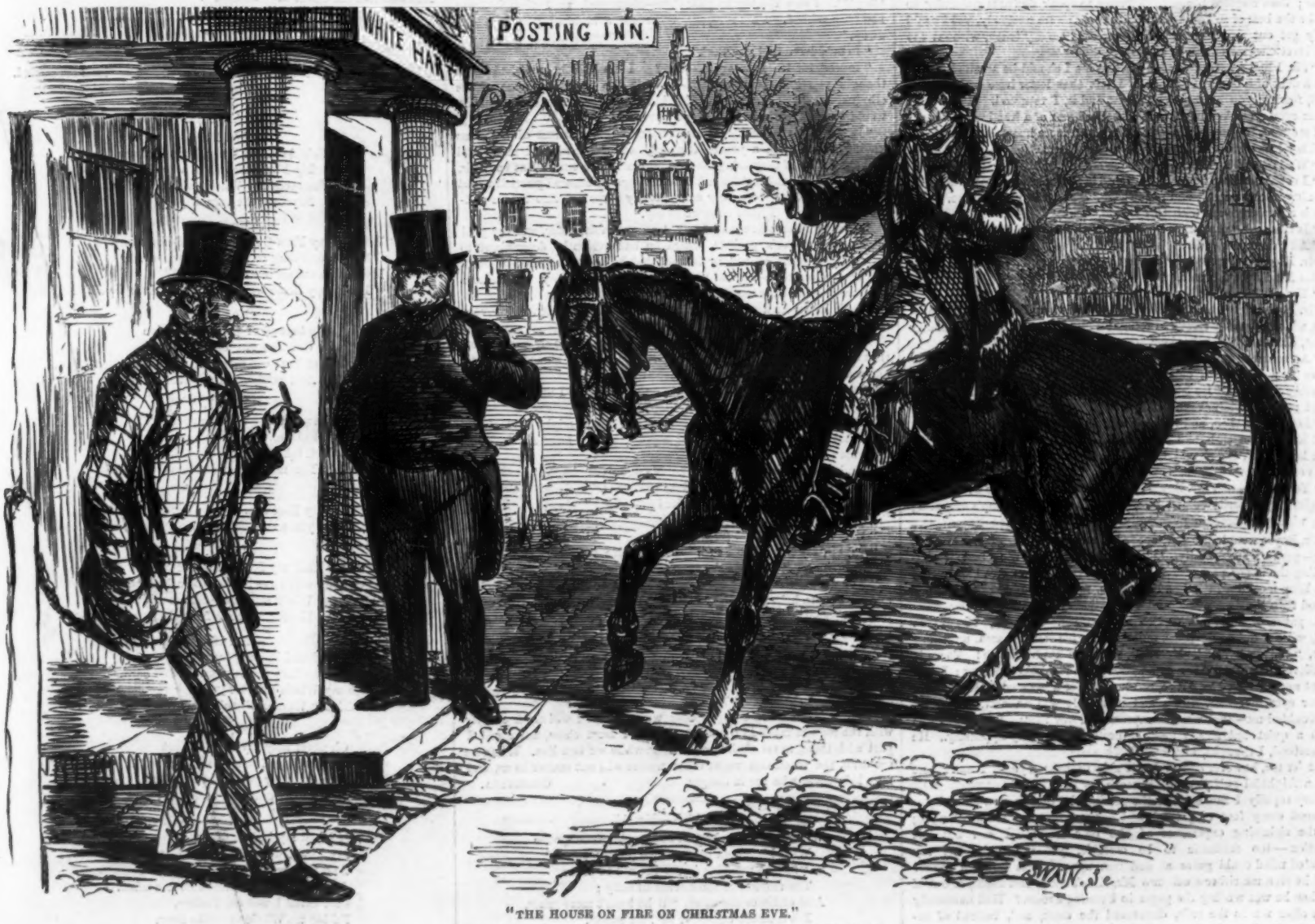
Oh never may my First be past
By you, joined to my next and last!
Oh, often may you hear my Whole,
If you have music in your soul!

No. 20.

If I had my heart's desire,
My First I'd go at once an' hire;
And then my Second I would find,
And tak' her where she'd have a mind.
Oh! could I wed her I adore,
I'd lay my Whole upon the floor,
And envy it when she did put
Upon its face her dainty fut.

"TO CHRISTINA: A CONFESSION."

"Its curved shining finger drew me towards it, and I heard its voice saying "Come!" It's the only way. Hasten! Save yourself!"




"THE HOUSE ON FIRE ON CHRISTMAS EVE."

You had better ride on, for you get nothing in my house, Mr. Twister!

THE SIEGE OF PEKIN.—SEE PAGE 596.

## THE CHILDREN OF THE REVELS.

MAKE the CHILDREN happy at Christmas! It is their innocent saturnalia, their prescriptive festival, their grand annual holiday, which no birthday celebration, no commemoration of successful cricket matches or grand boating races, can ever hope to equal. They look forward to it from the 7th of January to the 24th of December. They count over and over again its peculiar and remarkable attractions. Mincepies, plumpuddings, gigantic sirloins, coloured candles, a blaze of lamps, the pantomime, the comic song, the acted charade, and, above all, the faëry wonders of the Christmas-tree;—these are the appropriate and distinctive "properties" of Christmas. We have the lowest possible opinion, and so have the children, of the man who at any other period of the year can eat mincepie or plumpadding. Three months ago, in a certain provincial town, where a melancholy theatre is desperately kept open from June to October, we saw a pantomime—yes, a pantomime—announced, ay, and it was produced, at the aforesaid dramatic establishment. Of course, it did not, it could not, live. We know nothing of its merits. We dare say it might have been a tolerably good pantomime at Christmas-time; but nobody went to see it, or, seeing it, sat it through. Think Clown in September! of a Pantaloon at Michaelmas! of a Harlequin and harvest moons! It is impossible to reconcile such absurd contradictions. We should as lieve associate a certain Imperial potentate with a disinterested "idea."

*Mais revenons à nos moutons.* Let us make the children happy at Christmas. Let us bear with them gently; reverence the purity that is in them; admire the exuberance, the geniality, the naturalness of their mirth. We know what Berlioz thought of the charity children at St. Paul's; but what is that famous scene to a gathering of children at a Christmas pantomime?—of three and thirty (or thereabouts) of smiling young masters and misses round a Christmas-tree? There is no sight on earth to equal it. But to be happy with children we must make *them* happy, and exercise a stern control over our impatience, our unreasonableness, our hot, quick passions. We must sedulously consult the little warps and bends in their youthful natures. We must;—but let Coleridge preach our homily in noble verse:—

> O'er wayward children wouldst thou hold firm rule,
> And sun thee in the light of happy faces;
> Love, hope, and patience, these must be thy graces,
> And in thine own heart let them first keep school.

The ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS has contributed at divers times, and in divers ways, to childish happiness, and in this present Number its conductors have not forgotten "the children." The page placed at our own disposal is intended for them; absolutely and entirely for our "juvenile readers." Well, we propose to initiate them, as we have done in previous Christmas Numbers, into certain NEW PARLOUR GAMES, which shall exercise their mental faculties and test their imitative capabilities, which shall be somewhat more fanciful and even poetical than those famous old gymnastic exercises—"Hunt the Slipper," or "Blindman's Buff;" which shall develop to some slight extent the musical knowledge and elocutionary skill of the performers. Every household has its Kean, its Robson, its Charles Mathews, its Louise Keeley; and an aggregate of friendly households can always make up a decent "Dramatic Company." Amongst the senior members may generally be found an efficient prompter, a dexterous stage-manager, an orchestra, a scene-painter, and a dresser. Thus, then, the company formed and the stage prepared, we propose to furnish our Children of the Revels with appropriate dramas—or rather with dramatic games—which, amusing to the performers, will not, it is hoped, be objectionable to the audience.

And here we digress to explain our title. From an early period great celebrity attached to the boy actors of the old School of St. Paul's, nor did it desert the *alumni* of the present excellent foundation established by Dean Colet. At first they presented the public with elaborate "Mysteries and Moralities," drawn from the stores of Old Testament History; but, afterwards, as they, or their directors, grew bolder, with the comedies of Terence and Plautus, or the tragedies of Seneca. They set the fashion which has since been followed in many of our public schools. A troupe of boys, selected from the choristers of Westminster Abbey and Queen Elizabeth's chapel, were formally incorporated under the title of "Children of the Revels." Amongst them were Field, Underwood, and others, who in later life were fellow-actors with Shakspeare, and upon one of whom Ben Jonson wrote a famous epitaph:—

> 'Twas a child that so did thrive
> In grace and feature,
> As heaven and nature seemed to strive
> Which own'd the creature.
> Years he numbered, scarce thirteen,
> When fates turned cruel;
> Yet three filled zodiacs had he been
> The stage's jewel.

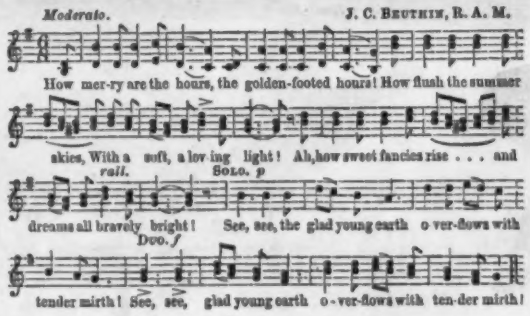
For our "Children of the Revels" we do not ask a public stage nor a poet's panegyrics. Give us a parlour, or a drawing-room, and a piano; and hey, presto! we ring the bell, and up goes the curtain.

## AN ANIMATED BOUQUET.

Two of the players are chosen to personate a knight and his ladye-love; and we are instructed to suppose that *he* is desirous of presenting *her* with a bouquet. He looks around, and finds that the locality where they are unfortunately placed is utterly bare of leaf or blossom. His despair is great. But he is in fairy land, and, of course, a fairy immediately makes her appearance. She undertakes to relieve him from his difficulty, and summons his companions, who enter, attired in long cloaks, and take up appropriate positions. With a tap of her wand she converts each into a flower; and as each change takes place the cloak is thrown aside and some emblem of the flower displayed. (This part of the arrangement must, of course, be left to the taste and fancy of the theatrical "dresser.") The knight then selects the flowers he prefers to make his bouquet. Each in turn joins him and his lady-love, and if any error is made, or if any delay takes place, a forfeit is exacted. The lady love then accepts the bouquet. The flowers form in a circle, and all dance round.

*SCENE.—A desert island. The sea appears in the distance. Enter* THE KNIGHT *and his* LADY LOVE *from a small barque, which the attendants draw up on the shore. They then walk forward hand in hand.*

THE KNIGHT AND THE LADY LOVE.




*Duet.*

How merry are the hours—
The golden-footed hours!
How flash the summer skies
With a soft, a loving liht!
Ah, now sweet fancies rise,
And dreams all bravely bright.
See, see! the glad young earth
Overflows with tender mirth!

THE KNIGHT.

Since, lady, in thyself I see
The fairest of all flow'rs;
Since brighter blossom may not be
In Flora's gayest bowers;
'Tis fitting I should gather now
The wildlings of the lea,
That they may crown those tresses brown,
And, as they sparkle there,
May pine to think *they* are so weak,
And *thou* so very fair.

LADY LOVE.

Nay, Rudolph, let the flow'ret glow
On mossy bank, in leafy brake;
'Tis there they make the daintiest show.
I would not for my sake
*One* rosebud from its stem were torn,
One violet pluck'd to fade away,
And lie—the cold wind's scorn—
In pitiful decay!

THE KNIGHT.

But not a blossom decks this desolate scene,
Not even a pimpernel uplifts its head:
The trees are gaunt; the leaves are—well, not green—
And Nature seems bleak, barren, gloomy, dead!
We've wander'd, sure, into some desert isle,
Where summer winds ne'er bring their burden rare;
Where Ocean never breaks into a smile,
And sadden'd streams a mournful music bear!

THE LADY LOVE.

'Tis true, the place is awful: but our love
May brighten it as with a light divine;
And so the lustre stooping from above
In all the dim, drear darkness softly shine!
And then the memories of other days!
Oh, o'er the past a tender radiance plays.

THE KNIGHT.

Let us hasten, my love, to a cheerier land,—
From these black barren peaks and these deserts of woe,
To some bower deep in beauty, where violets glow,
And roses their fragrance outpour on the breeze.

THE LADY LOVE.

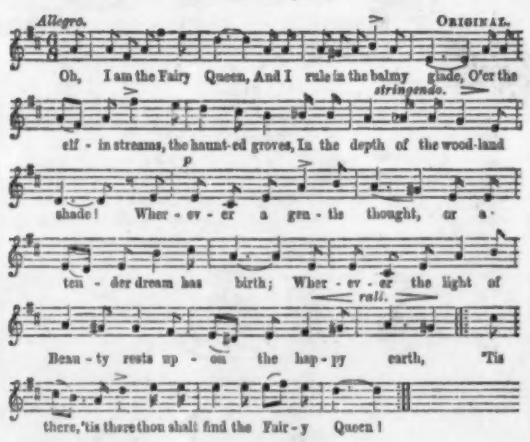
But, hark! a sweet music comes over the seas;
And, lo! a rich splendour has fall'n on the isle,
And the heav'n seems touch'd with a kindlier smile.
What mystery this!

THE KNIGHT.

See! see! a radiant form appears!

*(A car approaches the island, and out of it steps the* FAIRY QUEEN. *A red light is cast upon the scene.)*

THE FAIRY QUEEN.




*Song.*

Oh, I am the Fairy Queen,
And I rule in the balmy glade,
O'er the elfin streams and the haunted groves,
In the depth of the woodland shade;
Wherever a gentle thought
Or a tender dream has birth—
Wherever the light of beauty rests
Upon the happy earth,—
'Tis there, 'tis there,
Thou shalt find the Fairy Queen.

Oh, I am the Fairy Queen,
And minstrels sing my power
On the rippling Avon's grassy marge,*
In Mulla's aldern bower.†
And childhood's fancies long
Have been charmed by the elfin strain—
Oh, while the heart of the world beats true
The Fairy Queen shall reign!
And still, and still,
Thou shalt find the Fairy Queen!

*[She approaches the* KNIGHT *and the* LADY LOVE, *who receive her, bowing.]*

FAIRY QUEEN.

And so thou wanderest in a desert isle,
Where never leaf, nor bird, nor blossom smile;
It is not right that Beauty thus should part
From all that makes the lovely lovelier,
Yet ever there should bloom within her *heart*
The flowers of purest thoughts and *they* should stir
Her soul to sweet emotion.—But I am here
To meet your wishes.

* Shakspeare. † Spenser.

THE KNIGHT AND LADY LOVE.

Queen, and lady dear,
We bend before thee.

FAIRY QUEEN.

Soon this isle shall glow
With bravest blossoms, and the dainty show
Shall yield thee fitting gift for mistress fair.
Hither, ye gentles.

[*The* ATTENDANTS *on the* KNIGHT *and* LADY LOVE *approach, and form in a line.*]

Now choose what flower ye each would be,
The violet sweet on mossy lea,
Or primrose on the grassy bank,
Or snowdrop 'mid the herbage dank,
The rose, the lily—what ye will,
And I your choice will straight fulfil.

FIRST ATTENDANT.

Oh! I would be the rose,
The lady rose,
Which with so warm a beauty glows,
And o'er has been
Of flowers the queen,
The rose, the regal rose!

THE FAIRY QUEEN.

Be thou the rose.

*(She waves her wand, and the change takes place.)*

SECOND ATTENDANT.

Deep 'mid the grasses shines the silver crest
Of the all-beauteous lily of the vale;
Even so a modest maiden stands confest,—
Fair in her purity of soul, and best
Her shrinking loveliness
Heaven's angel-eyes approve. Ah, never fail
Those tender graces of pure womanhood—
The smile benignant and the glance subdued!

THE FAIRY QUEEN.

Arise, the lily!

THIRD ATTENDANT.

A lotus, I. Laden with flower and fruit
The enchanted stem I fain would rear,
Till men, with love and wonder mute,
And maidens pale with gentle fear,
Should hymn my praises thus:—
"The lotus blooms below the barren peak,
The lotus blows by every winding creek:
All day the wind breathes low, with mellower tone,
Through every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow lotus-dust is blown."*

THE FAIRY QUEEN.

The lotus, thou!

FOURTH ATTENDANT.

And I will be the daisy, the poet's darling flower,
And a blush shall tip my cheek, for I'm of "low degree;"
And I dare not lift my head in the rose-queen's regal bower,
But I sparkle in the valley, and I laugh upon the lea.
And the "woe" and modest daisy shall be remember'd long
In the peasant's honest heart, and the poet peasant's song.

* Tennyson.

THE FAIRY QUEEN.

Be thou the daisy!

FIFTH ATTENDANT.

Let me be the violet,
The rare, sweet violet.
My cheek with Heaven's kisses wet,
Mine eyes all bright with Heaven's blue,
And 'neath "a mossy stone" I'll hide,
For ne'er my brow is hot with pride,
Tho' "sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes
Or Cytherea's breath."*

THE FAIRY QUEEN.

Be thou the violet!

SIXTH ATTENDANT.

And I would be the marigold,
With my crown of glory bold,
Following the sun all day with tender looks,
Or gazing steadfast in the glassy brooks.

THE FAIRY QUEEN.

The sunlit marigold!

SEVENTH ATTENDANT.

Let me be the daffodil,
The golden-gleaming daffodil,
"That comes before the swallow dares, and takes
The winds of March with beauty."

THE FAIRY QUEEN.

Be thou the daffodil!

EIGHTH ATTENDANT.

The pansy, I
That love may hold me in remembrance sweet,
Ah, since the happy smiling hours are fleet
In passing from us—lightning-winged they fly—
Even let them live again in memory;
Even bid them in our pleasant fancies be
The joyous hours again!

THE FAIRY QUEEN.

And thou, the pansy!
See now, fair sir, the blossoms bloom before ye,
And so to Fairy Land do I restore ye,
And yield ye these "sweet nurslings of the skies,"†
To glad with blithesome looks your loving eyes.

THE KNIGHT.

Which shall I choose for thee, my Lady Love?

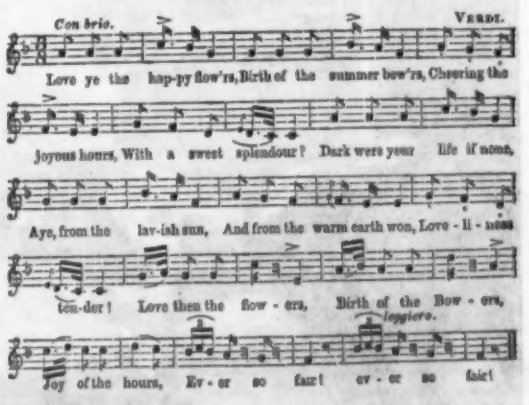
*(Rapidly.)*

Come hither, flaunting *Marigold*,
And thou, my blue-eyed *Violet*;
Approach, thou *Daffodil* so bold,
The rare *Queen Rose* I'll ne'er forget!
Hither, my *Pansy*, thoughtful flower,
And *Daisy*, thou, the spring's sweet dower;
*Lotus*, and *Lily*, hither all,
And at your lady's feet obedient fall.

[*As each* FLOWER *is named, she approaches the* LADY LOVE; *and, if any mistake is made, incurs a forfeit. When all the* FLOWERS *have been summoned, they kneel before the* LADY LOVE, *who kisses each. They then arise, form in a circle, and dance round the* KNIGHT *and the* LADY LOVE. *The* FAIRY QUEEN *raises her wand, and the curtain drops.*]

* Shakspeare.
† Keble.

FINAL CHORUS.




Such is a modest outline of our new drawing-room game, "carefully adapted to the juvenile comprehension."

## THE HOUSE ON FIRE ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

I GENERALLY take up my hunting quarters at the White Hart at Bastock. Do not be alarmed; I am not going to bore you with a story of a run, or the praise of my horses (good as they are), for I know what it is to listen to men who fancy their favourite sport is the only one worth following. I seldom dine with either of my brothers, for one has Izaak Walton by rote, and the other can quote every line of Colonel Walker. I flatter myself I know better.

The White Hart stands at the lower end of Bastock, at the foot of a gentle rise, leading to the turnpike. In the front of the inn is a row of low posts and chains, upon which I usually sit when the weather is fine, and smoke my matutinal cigar. The main street forms itself into a letter Y, one branch leading to the quiet old church, and the other to the busy market-place. Once on a time I don't know how many coaches passed through Bastock, and there are stable legends that take one's breath away to listen to at the White Hart of the incredibly small number of seconds required to change the "Royal Independent" when it run opposition to the "True Blue." Those dear old coaching days! I have a great respect for the railway interest, but I must say there has been on pleasure—emphatically *pleasure*—in travelling since the abolition of stage-coaches. Oh, yes, I grant all that! Civilisation—ends of the earth brought together—time is money—annihilation of space. Very true, and quite right into the bargain; but who takes his place in a "first class" with the same anticipations of enjoyment as he mounted the box of Charley Newman's "Item"? Who feels the same tingle of delight at the whistle and screech of the "Pluton" or "Fireater" as he did at the "All right!" and tantantara of the "Marquis of Lansdowne's", whilom for some thirty years guard to the Louth mail? Who will mention in the same breath the bun (pah!) and the soda-water (pish!) served by a beauty as solemn as Atropos at the Rattlecash Station to the glass of—"whatever you like," dispensed by pretty, smiling Polly at the White Hart, the second change out of London? And having

Delighted swill'd the large, luxurious draught,

and lighted a pleasant weed (by-the-by, the only unadulterated article of consumption in London, according to Dr. Hassall. Hear that and rejoice, ye fumigenous mortals!) and having presented another to the coachman, away again, crashing along through the invigorating air, silently enjoying the beautiful prospects stretched every way around, or listening to a pleasant story of man or horse to the journey's end. *Hei mihi!* But I was born before railways, and may be prejudiced. You must not mind my digressions, because I am not a professed story-teller, and must be allowed to get on my own way.

I was at my accustomed place one glorious April morning, and, although mentally abusing the blessed sun for destroying all chance of a good scenting-day, I could not be insensible to the tranquillising influence of the balmy air and cheerful light as it played about the roofs and projecting gables of the quiet homes of Bastock. So peaceful was the time that it was difficult to imagine that human passions ever disturbed the indwellers of the place, or that other than Peace and Good will were the inmates. I had not then heard the story of Peter Lackpenny, a miserly old hunks, upon whom I had wasted a large amount of sympathy as I had seen him shuffling about Bastock in a gown of grey duffel, patched and dirty enough for a scarecrow. Peter had passed his days in Bastock, and had fomented all the quarrels in that otherwise peaceful place—at least so it was said at the White Hart. He belonged to one of the professions—I will not say which, because it may be supposed I give way to popular prejudice; but it was neither physic nor divinity; and, though he professed to have made nothing by his amiable pursuit, it turned out he had saved nearly £5000, which, by great retributive justice, was ultimately the death of him. Many years ago Peter had a sister who had married unfortunately, so far as worldly prosperity was concerned; but her troubles were soon over, as she died three years after her marriage, leaving a boy and a tender-hearted husband behind her, the latter of whom, it was said, so pined after his wife that he died too, and the care of the child, Johnny Twister, devolved upon his maternal uncle, Peter Lackpenny;—and precious care he took of his nephew! He sent him to school, it is true, because some learning was necessary to enable the boy to get his own living. He clothed him, but his costume was very much after that of the ancient Britons, exhibiting rather more flesh than broadcloth, and he fed him, it was supposed, because Johnny continued to exist. True, there were many soft-hearted people who fancied that they saw hunger always written in the boy's face, and kindly gave him stray lumps of pudding and odd slices of bread and butter; and no one recollects the lad refusing either. The only thing of an educational character of which Peter seems to have been prodigal was that preparation from the tree of knowledge called the rod, and of that little Johnny was known to have considerably more than was thought to be good for him. Morning, noon, and night was he undergoing "discipline," as Peter called it; and yet, strange to say, Johnny Twister grew up the greatest liar and ne'er-do-weel in Bastock. Peter had whipped all the original Adam out of him, and driven in an evil spirit, for not a week passed as the lad grew up but some small roguery or dishonourable action was proved against him. At last matters became so bad that Peter turned his nephew out of doors, declaring that he was a disgrace to his family, and the sooner he starved or drowned himself the better for Johnny and the county. There were some people weak enough to think that Peter was wrong—that, as he had sown the harvest, he ought to reap it, although it were only a crop of thistles. Peter was not ass enough for that, however; but, foreseeing that Johnny only promised labour in vain, left him to the winds of heaven. Johnny hung about Bastock for some time during the summer, lolling against sunny walls, or sleeping under the shady sides of them all day, and disappearing no one knew where at nightfall. How he lived was partly a mystery, but he really seemed to be getting flesh, when it came to be whispered about that numerous pieces of cold bacon and other viands were disappearing nightly in a very supernatural manner from the larders of Bastock. By one consent the finger of suspicion was pointed at Johnny Twister; and an inhuman old grocer, who had lost half a sucking-pig, had the cruelty to tell him so. Poor Johnny took this information so much to heart that he left his native village the same night, and I believe it was generally understood at the time that nobody was anxious for his return. But he did return; and I saw him on the evening of the very April morning to which I have referred. We had had a very remarkable run that day, considering the badness of the scent. We met at Crickley Church Green (close to the churchyard, in order to solace the *manes* of some of the old sportsmen who lie beneath its green mounds, I suppose), drew Sittingbury Wood blank, but found a fine dog-fox at Langley Bottom, went away pointing to Greystock, where the hounds threw up for a few minutes, but, hitting the scent without a cast being made, run him to Trackley Cross, and——Hold hard! I forgot; I promised to be silent concerning the Noble Science, and I will be so. Well, on the evening of that day, I was at my accustomed seat, when a low, rakish-looking fellow, mounted on an unmistakable screw, rode up to the White Hart. It was not the first hostel he had visited in his ride—that was evident as his bleared eye and disordered dress gave indications of potations pottle deep. If his appearance had not betrayed his condition, the tipsy voice with which he summoned my respected host, Markwell, would have sufficiently attested it.

"Hollo, Markwell, old fell-ow!" he bawled out, so that all Bastock might have heard him had they been so minded. "Markwell, old fell-ow, where are you?"

The summons was obeyed, and I saw instantly that mine host recognised his visitor with surprise and displeasure.

"What, don't you know me, old cock?" said the new-comer. "Ring the ostler's bell, and we'll have a glass of brandy-and-water, and I'll let you know who I am." He prepared to dismount.

"You had better keep where you are," said Markwell, to my utter astonishment, "for I know you well enough. You had better ride on, for you get nothing in my house, Mr. Twister, or anywhere else in Bastock, if I'm not much mistaken."

The tipsy man's face became almost black with passion, and the oaths he uttered were of such tremendous import that I trembled to hear them, and I have heard some swearing in my time. It was clear that Markwell was not to be frightened, and Mr. Twister, having exhausted himself, drove his spurs into the poor brute which carried him, and rode off shouting and gesticulating like a demon.

"You have lost a pleasant customer," said I. "Who is he?"

"His name is John Twister, sir," replied Markwell, "the nephew of the old man whose mean appearance attracted your attention the last season you were here. The old man died a year ago last January."

Mine host told me as much of Peter Lackpenny's history as I have narrated to you, and then went on with the subsequent adventures of Mr. John Twister.

Some three or four years after the sudden disapperance from Bastock of that worthy young gentleman, the gold discoveries in Australia were made known to Europe, and the effect upon the enterprising population of England is remembered by every one. Old Lackpenny heard of this new Eldorado, and the conviction that age had deprived him of the power of profiting by those discoveries nearly drove him out of his wits. He would talk of nothing but nuggets, placers, and gold-dust, until he fairly cried at the golden visions which he was too old to realise. It seemed, however, that Fortune had resolved that he should share in her golden favours, and by means the least anticipated by any one in Bastock. One morning old Lackpenny was surprised at receiving a letter bearing the London postmark, and in the handwriting of his disreputable nephew, John Twister. Never was missive more ungraciously received. It was tossed contemptuously upon the table unopened, and was railed at as containing another beggar's petition to be read and thrown into the fire, and narrowly escaped that fate without the preliminary perusal. A storm, however, kept Lackpenny within doors, and more from listlessness than curiosity he broke the envelope. The letter, which at first he scarcely read with attention, suddenly appeared to interest him greatly. His face became flushed, and his keen, grey eyes were extended and fixed intently upon the paper in his hand. And no wonder, for the statement communicated was of gold: gold in such abundance that even Peter's covetousness had hardly extended beyond it. He could scarcely believe his eyes, but there was the fact vouched for by an extract from a colonial newspaper. And John Twister, his scapegrace, abandoned nephew, had become a rich man; and not only had forgiven Peter all the past, but invited him to London to share someway—John did not say how—in the good fortune which had befallen him. The letter said, and the cutting from the newspaper confirmed it, that four adventurers at Queenover diggings had discovered a monster nugget of gold, valued at five thousand pounds. The lucky finders had proceeded to England with their treasure, and John Twister's letter told to his delighted uncle of their safe arrival, and that he (Johnny) was one. He requested his uncle to hasten on the receipt of the letter to London, vaguely hinting that there was business to be done by which the old man might be advantaged. In a minute Peter was decided; he saw not the rain streaming down the window-panes, neither heard he the wind roaring in his smokeless chimney, but, taking from a secret drawer in an old bureau a large, rusty, leather pocket-book, and without which he never went far from home, he wrapped himself in a faded blue camlet cloak, which had seen many years' service, and made the best of his way to the railroad. The old cloak let in the rain through its timeworn seams, and Peter took his place in a third-class carriage, shivering with cold, but rendered quite insensible to it by the mental exercise of building a golden castle, the foundation of which was Johnny Twister's letter. Arrived in London, he found his now excellent nephew waiting to receive him; but, had that worthy young man not acknowledged the uncle, Peter would scarcely have recognised Johnny. The diggings, perhaps, had done their work, and left traces on the nephew's face quite as marked as a long course of dissipation would have done. Peter generously saw in them the records only of hard fare, patient toil, and anxious watchings; and for the first time for five-and-twenty years he folded his sister's son to his bosom. Our space will not allow us to linger over this touching reconciliation, but we will at once introduce Peter to the other fortunate adventurers of Queenover. They were men of the same stamp as John Twister, but were dressed in the red shirts and long water-boots which they had worn at the diggings. Peter received a hearty welcome, enhanced by a plain but plentiful repast which was awaiting his arrival. Some capital whisky-punch having been brewed by Johnny, the conversation became free and friendly, and it required but little circumlocution on Johnny's part to obtain the consent of his partners to show their treasure to the uncle, of whom they had heard him speak so frequently when the world lay, as it were, between them. One of the men locked the door, and, taking a chair, placed his back against the key-hole. The others, with some difficulty, dragged from beneath the bed a battered portmanteau, which, being unlocked and unstrapped, was opened, and displayed to the gaze of the gold-adoring Peter the monster nugget in all its auriferous beauty. Peter clasped his hands in wonder, and then gently stroked the insensate metal as though it were sensible of his caress. He tried to lift it, but his strength was not equal to the task; and he had never believed, until that moment, that there was any quantity of gold he could not have carried.

And then he listened, with mouth agape, to the wondrous story of the finding of the monster nugget. How the four diggers had worked and worked, until they almost despaired, when Johnny hit upon this "reef of gold;" how they released it from its native soil, and wrapped it in an old sugar-bag, and placed it in a secret place of the hole.; how they feared that their mighty treasure might tempt some of the unscrupulous diggers to murder them for their wealth; and how they had hidden it in a wheelbarrow, under empty tubs and straw litter, and then buried it beneath their rude dining-table in their tent until the time came to convey their precious charge to Melbourne; how they kept watch over it, day and night, for four days and four nights, until, arrived at Melbourne, they could speak without reserve of their unparalleled success to the wonder of all. They showed him where they had filed away a portion of the lump to assay the value of the gold, and give him to keep—yes, to keep without charge—the melted produce.

The nugget being carefully replaced and the punch finished, Peter's companions retired to their separate rooms, the honour of guarding the nugget being confided to Johnny, as the original finder. When uncle and nephew were alone, Johnny locked the door, as his companion had done previously, and, to make themselves secure from observation, stuffed the keyhole with paper. Peter was somewhat puzzled by these proceedings until he reflected upon the value of the charge confided to his nephew's safe keeping: that worthy young man had, however, his own reasons for the precautions he had taken. Carefully collecting the cinders and waste coal from the fender, he built up the decaying fire, and seemed as careful of the fuel as his miserly relation could have been. After a pause he said:—

"Uncle, since I last saw you I have thought much upon my past and future life, and I have come to the conclusion that you have been always right and I always wrong."

"Glad to hear it, my dear child; very glad," exclaimed Peter.

"Yes; and so am I to say it. I have arrived at the conclusion that, preach as they will, the only real happy man is a rich one, and I am resolved to be rich," said Johnny, emphatically slapping his knee.

"Well, you are rich, though not very rich," observed Peter.

"But I will be, uncle; I will be ten times as rich before another year is over my head."

"Dear me! How? how? asked Peter. "I shouldn't mind a partnership if you could make it clear."

"That's it, that's why I sent for you to London," said Johnny, in a suppressed tone. "You saw *that*," pointing to the portmanteau under the bed. Peter nodded his head rapidly. "It is worth six thousand pounds, and I found it; had I been alone it would have been mine, all mine, uncle Peter!"

"What a pity you had them with you! what a pity we hadn't been together!" sighed Peter, casting up his eyes to the ceiling.

"That's past wishing for now," said Johnny, in the same subdued voice as before; "but, if we can't secure *all* the prize, we may have the lion's share yet."

"How? how?" eagerly asked Peter, drawing his chair closer to his nephew.

"When the nugget was examined in Melbourne," whispered Johnny, "it was thought to contain a third at least of quartz, which made it worth about three thousand pounds. We, however, caused its value to be stated at what you saw in the piece of Melbourne newspaper I sent you. Since we have been home I was intrusted to get it essayed, and I am assured, from calculations made by the gold-dealer, that if the nugget were melted it would prove to be nearly all gold, and worth between five and six thousand pounds. Now, uncle Peter, though I found the gold, I need not find the value for the benefit of others, the more especially as my partners are rogues enough to deceive any one they can for their advantage; so much so that, believing the Melbourne value to be the true one, they would consent that you should believe it to be worth the greater sum."

"Me! Why me?" exclaimed Peter.

"Hush!" said the nephew, "speak low. Because they believe, from what I have said at odd times, that you might become purchaser."

"Me! What do you mean? I've no money. Can scarce keep body and soul together."

"Uncle," said Johnny, rather sternly, "let the time be past for humbug between us. Let us speak as men who, having a common interest, have at least common confidence in each other. I know you have money at your command, and I have the means [Johnny pointed to the old portmanteau] to double the sum you may venture. That gold yonder is worth six thousand pounds: by purchasing it for £3500 my greedy partners will believe they have done you when, in reality, we shall be the gainers of two thousand pounds at least."

Peter was startled at the boldness of this proposition, and for some time could not bring his mind to contemplate such an enormous investment. The worthy pair sat late into the night, however, and before they sought to sleep they had arranged a plan to accomplish their projected villany.

We have no desire to record the lies and shifts employed to effect the bargain, but sure enough Peter Lackpenny and the monster nugget arrived together at Bastock on the morning of Christmas Eve, 185—. The treasure was concealed in a large packing-case, marked "Ironmongery," and the railway officials marvelled at the recklessness of Peter in travelling with such an additional weight of luggage. Nor were the good people of Bastock less surprised when they saw John Twister and his uncle walking down the street apparently the best friends in the world. Nor was their wonder lessened when, late in the evening, a bright light was seen shining through the window of Peter Lackpenny, and a cheerful volume of smoke wreathing from his chimney. There was a chorus of voices—strange voices, too—chanting the burden of some wild drinking-song, followed by roars of boisterous laughter that shook the old walls of Peter's dwelling, and mingled strangely with the church bells ringing in the advent of Christmas Day. Just before midnight a four-wheeled chaise was brought to the door, and Peter and his noisy visitors came out into the street. Their parting was as boisterous as their carouse, and ended at last in their forcing old Peter into the chaise to pay the toll of the turnpike-gate which stood at the end of the village.

In vain did Peter Lackpenny protest, and as vainly did he invoke the intercession of his nephew, who only laughed at him, and said the ride would do him good.

John Twister was the LAST TO LEAVE THE HOUSE and mount the carriage.

Their shouts and laughter were still audible in the distance when a lurid light streamed from the half-closed door of Peter's house, followed by clouds of dense smoke, that climbed up the wall and hung about the roof as though loth to depart. A crackling of wood, and more light and smoke, and the truth became evident. Peter's house was on fire. The old man returning from his compulsory ride was almost the first to discover his misfortune, and the few neighbours who had assembled to render assistance were terrified by his shrieks and frantic appearance. His first impulse was to rush into the burning house, but the smoke and flame drove him back, and then kindly hands restrained him. After awhile he became calmer, and a ghastly smile stole into his face

"THE PRODIGAL SON."—DRAWN BY S. READ.

"Warily, almost stealthily, with bated breath and cautious step, the youthful figure crossed the terrace walk, and peered into the bright room."

as he clapped his hands and cried, "Ah, that cannot burn!—that cannot burn!" The neighbours thought him mad, and the more so when he strove to prevent their attempts to extinguish the fire.

"None enter here!" he cried. "Let it burn to the ground! I am master here, and will have my way. Let it burn!—let it burn!"

There was something terrible in the sight of the spare form of the old man attired in his long duffel gown, his arms cast into the air and his long white locks tinted by the lurid glare of the flames. The roof had fallen in some time; but from the centre of the dwelling there rose up at intervals long tongues of fire and columns of dark smoke that puzzled the bystanders.

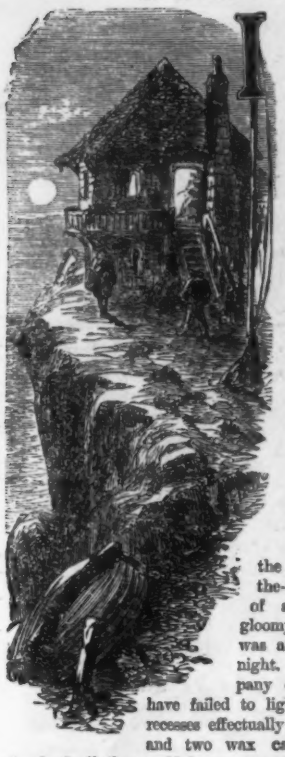
It was daylight before the fire had exhausted itself, and Peter's home lay before him a mass of smoking rubbish. Yet the old man kept up his unceasing march backwards and forwards, and so continued throughout Christmas Day, rejecting the food his neighbours offered him, and only quenching his thirst with deep draughts of water. Every now and then, as the night advanced, he tried the heat of the embers, and at length, when the moon had risen, and all had left him to keep his strange watch as he pleased, he took a mattock from a shed which had escaped the fire, and began to rake aside the ashes which covered the spot whence the tongues of flame and the black smoke had issued so continuously. He continued this labour long after the villagers were asleep; and then many were awakened by shrieks and moans, made terrible by the stillness of the night. Some rose from their beds, and looked forth to learn the meaning of those cries; whilst others, more courageous or more compassionate, suspecting the truth, went forth and sought the wreck of Peter's home. There they found the wretched creature on his knees—now beating the ashes with his hands, now clutching his scanty locks, and shrieking or moaning by turns. On the spot he had cleared some molten metal glittered in the moonlight. It was not the gold Peter had purchased with the scrapings and plunderings of his life, but lead—worthless lead, which his treacherous nephew and his confederates had moulded and plated to resemble the precious lump found at Queenover. The biter had been bitten. The wicked sower had gathered his harvest of hemlock, and the poison would destroy him. Yes; a year—only a year—he mourned his departed gold, and then he died.

No wonder mine host of the White Hart declined the custom of Johnny Twister.

M. L.

HOME FOR THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.—DRAWN BY A. HUNT.

## THE PRODIGAL SON.



I SHOULD imagine, of all dreary and unenviable plights, none can surpass that of a friendless man in the lonely coffee-room of an unfrequented country inn on Christmas Eve. For all that Shenstone or Sterne may have said or written to the contrary, my experience is that the best hostelries in the world had better—except for passing bed and board—be avoided by cheerful-minded folks who would remain so; buts most assuredly, at such a season, by all, whether of gay temperament or grave, who have any home memories of the past likely to seize so capital an opportunity of haunting them. For they can be anything but pleasant company sometimes these home memories; and faces in the fire will not always smile upon the lonely watcher.

Some such unpleasant experience as this was perhaps disturbing the solitary figure who sat before the dull fire in the strangers' room of an out-of-the-way country inn upon the eve of a recent Christmas. It was a gloomy room at the best, and it was at its worst, assuredly, upon this night. All the resources of a gas company devoted to the purpose might have failed to light its dark walls and gloomy recesses effectually; and as for the flickering fire and two wax candles upon which the duty devolved, all they could do was to make a sort of feeble halo in which the bending figure, a heap of luggage in the corner near him, some open letters, an empty decanter, and a little pile of husks of filberts upon a table by his side, were dimly perceptible. He had sat there alone all that evening. His cigar was better than no friend at all, and he had clung to its companionship so closely that there was quite a little heap of whitening ashes on the hearth before him as, with a deep breath that needed very little more intensity to become a heavy sigh, he rose, stretched himself, and, throwing back the heavy window-curtains, looked out abroad.

There was so little to look at, however, out of doors, and that little was so cheerless, that he soon came back to the fireside, and stood before it with folded arms, in a listless, weary fashion. Now that he had turned his face to the dim light, it might be seen that he was a young well-dressed man, of tall and graceful bearing, and features that would have been very handsome, but for the care that lay so black upon his brow, and a certain bitter, stern resolve, that hardened the muscles of his mouth and chin into an expression of almost fierce defiance.

With an impatient gesture he broke from the dim halo again, and paced wearily up and down the gloomy room. How slowly the evening wore away! how heavily the lagging minutes sped! With every nerve and muscle braced for action, how trying this dull interval of expectation was! Although he was in no mood for human companionship just then—he had fled hither for escape from it, indeed—this utter solitude of time and place depressed him painfully. It offered so capital an opportunity, too, for foolish, unmanly fancies and impulses to plague and trouble him, and they were making such a busy use of it, that they nearly drove him mad. He could not rest this Christmas Eve; and with an angry exclamation at his folly, he threw on a rough peacoat and travelling cap and left the room.

The prospect out of doors was so cheerless, and any alleviation of his dulness there so improbable, that he halted upon the threshold doubtfully. But while he hesitated he caught sight, through a chance-opened door, of a merry party in the landlord's private room, and the sound of women's voices and the laughter of children broke upon his ear. That decided him. Anything was better than carrying those voices and that ringing laughter back to his lonely vigil up stairs.

It was an out-of-the-way seaport town, of all places in the world for a lonely man to be wasting a Christmas Eve in. There might be some little bustle and animation in the main street, where the townsfolk were busy making their Christmas purchases, but none whatever on the broad exposed walk that looked seaward. For it was a rough and threatening night, on which few, if any, would be abroad from choice. The very boats were hauled up high and dry upon the shingle, and the rising sea did what it would with the lonely pier, tumbling up among its gaunt timbers, and sweeping them clear of what little snow now and then collected upon them. And the life and gaiety indoors generally made the cheerless night more bitter to the lonely man. Through the chinks of closed shutters he could catch glimpses of the warmth within, and now and then from an open door a flood of light and a little storm of song and laughter would tumble out upon him as he passed. Even in the look-out station, where the pilot people kept watch—keen as they were for business generally, it would be an unwelcome signal that should disturb their revels that night—there was a merry party met. As he paused in the snow below, looking seaward, a rich, powerful voice trolled out the verse of an old sea-song musically, whose last words were taken up and re-echoed by the eager chorus.

It was something to be within hearing of light hearts, and so, almost instinctively, he moved closer under the overhanging upper story, where he was to some extent sheltered from the snowdrift. He had not been long there when a new-comer, with his foot upon the stair, caught sight of him and paused, wondering most likely to see him there. He thought it better to make some remark, and so he said, "It was a bitter night." The sailor hesitated; he had some doubt about it evidently; but at last he entered into the other's situation enough to admit, "Well, it might be down there;" and then, with another shrug of his broad shoulders, he passed into the warmth and light above.

Left alone, that same foolish yet powerful fancy which had made him so restless in the inn's solitude disturbed him again. Although he laughed it to scorn, and would never yield to it for all its urgency, he caught himself speculating upon the practicability of doing so over and again. He gave way to it so far, indeed, once as to step out into the ray of light that came from the room above and look at his watch. Eight o'clock. There *was* time, then, to catch the night train, which would carry him within six miles of them. It would be strange if those six miles, across a country that he knew so well, could not be walked before midnight; and then—then—— Pshaw! he dismissed the foolish fancy almost angrily.

But it recurred to his mind, and with more pressing force. Who would ever know his weakness? Besides, it would give him something to do, and the thought of returning to his weary vigil was unbearable. It was weak, foolish, unmanly; but he had committed many greater follies, and this would be but adding one more to the long list, and bringing it to a fitting close. For with to-morrow would begin a new life, in which the commission of such a weakness would be impossible.

Angry with the impulse—swayed by it against his conviction, and almost despite his will—undecided to the very last, even when his ticket had been taken, and his hand was on the carriage-door—he yet allowed it to guide him. Alone in the carriage, and committed to one stage at least of its purpose, he folded his arms and leant back to think——

Of what? Of his life up to this time, perhaps. Of that long train of follies which was to have its last item appended to it to-night, and thenceforth end. When did it begin? With the high-spirited boy who would bend to no will that thwarted his own wayward impulse—with the headstrong youth, whose undisciplined temper brooked no advice that appeared to assume the semblance of command—with the self-willed man who threw off all control, and would be slave to nothing but his own passions. He could not decide. It was a bitter retrospect, but he had not been altogether to blame, perhaps. Although he felt more open to self-rebuke that night than he remembered to have been for years, he could not help thinking that if his friends had treated him more judiciously—if his father's censure had been less violent and indiscriminate, and his mother's influence allowed more scope—things might never have come to this pass. No, wrong and foolish as he confessed himself to have been, they had not given him fair play at home.

And had the world? At the thought his face hardened into a bitter expression, and his hands clenched with an angry meaning. Like a fool—he saw it now—he had staked his all—health, fortune, happiness, in fair and honest play against loaded dice, and lost of course. Well, he was no coward, to rail at his ill-fortune or claim sympathy for his simple folly! Broken, ruined, flung in love and play by his closest friends, with his life withered in its spring, and hope almost dead within him, he would be firm at least to his new resolve. It was a vile, worthless world, whose empty prizes he had failed to seize. There was stuff in him for something better, and he would seek it under a new and distant sky, and, it might be, redeem his wasted fortune and reclaim his dishonoured name. If he fell—and he knew quite well the suffering he had earned and must expect—they would never know it; if he conquered, some day, perhaps, he might return to the home of his boyhood with a claim upon their respect as well as love. He might have the latter now, perhaps, if his lips would utter a tithe of what his full heart felt, but this his pride forbade. Let this strange impulse have its way. It had forgotten him, no doubt; but he would return this Christmas Eve to the home he loved so well, and see the old place, it might be for the last time. To-morrow he sailed for a new life in a new world, where he would be safe from weak deeds if he could not escape regretful thoughts.

When he alighted at the railway station, and stood face to face with the open country, he found, to his surprise, that more snow had fallen inland than by the sea, and that it lay around some inches deep.

It was not snowing just then, but threatening clouds were drifting past the moon, so thick and low that a flight of wild fowl, seen one moment wedging their way across the leaden sky inland, were lost in the mist the next, and the rising night wind swept by him with a strong, ominous wail. It was a bitter night; but the bracing air, and, perhaps, the pleasure of strong physical action, so raised his spirits that, as he trudged forward through the snow, he found himself whistling merrily or humming scraps of old, long-forgotten songs. It was with almost boyish pleasure that he chose the shorter cuts across the fields, more for the delight of vaulting over the gates and stiles than because they saved much time or labour; and once when he took a rasping fence, from choice rather than necessity, and rolled headlong into a deep ditch of snow, he gathered himself up with such a hearty burst of laughter that, had any one been by to hear, he could only have come to one conclusion—that his was a light heart hastening to a happy Christmas home. Very probably the few wayfarers whom he met and interchanged cheery goodnights with; the busy carriers whom he overtook, urging on their weary horses; and the red-coated mail-drivers, who swept by him over the snow, noiselessly, as though they were spectral huntsmen, bound to some great ghostly meet, thought so too.

Strangely enough some such fancy was busy in his mind. If for a moment he ceased to dwell upon his fancied wrongs—his father's harsh censure and bitter words, his mother's averted face of shame—for that moment he seemed to be hurrying home. He even caught himself speculating how they would receive him, and picturing the curiosity of some, the joy of others, the surprise of all. Upon such a night it was not improbable that their hearts might be open to him. His staid elder brother, who had never sympathised with his lighter temperament, might not be sorry, perhaps, to clasp his hand; he could picture the glad cry with which his little golden-haired sister Lily would leap to his embrace; it was likely enough that the proud grey face that had looked down so coldly and pitilessly upon his prodigal life would melt to see him at his feet; and he need not doubt the measure of welcome that mother's heart would give which he might break, but never could estrange. As he thought of them all, a sudden mist rose to his eyes and blotted the bright home figures from his sight. Pshaw! this was unmanly folly. If he had so little mastery over himself it were better to turn back before worse ensued. But he meant this threat so little that he did not even pause to give it serious consideration, but held on his way steadily.

In time he had reached the summit of the steep hill that overlooked his old village home. The white snow lay deep upon the low roofs; the all trees, swayed by the risen wind, tossed great armfuls of it to one another; down the swift stream little rafts of ice laden with it coursed merrily until they came into fierce collision at the village bridge. Here and there, although it was growing late, the white street was chequered with warm lines of light. Quite a flood of it was streaming from the bow windows of the old millhouse. He almost persuaded himself that he could hear the hearty miller's voice, and see the dark eyes of the coquettish miller's daughter, who had flirted with him as with the rest, and once for a season had entire possession of his boyish heart. He could not help smiling as he remembered how fond he had been of her in his daisy days, and how shamefully he had jilted her. But the smile soon darkened into an ugly frown. The pretty miller's daughter had been amply revenged since then, and by her sex.

As he passed down the quiet street he stopped before some of the lighted windows, endeavouring to recognise the voices of those within, and, peering through the curtains of the village inn, was amused to see the old set round the chimney corner. One or two might be sleeping peacefully in the churchyard under their coverlet of snow; but the purple-nosed clerk still filled his prescriptive seat, and the red-faced blacksmith had just finished his one song, which he had sung there any time these thirty years, and, with a clamour of pipes and glasses, they were knocking down the bashful saddler, who had never sung in his life and never would, but who would be teased to do so by his mischievous comrades to the last day of his "public" life.

As he lingered there the chimes of the church clock struck the hour—eleven. He must hasten on if he would be in time. Turning down a by-path, he mounted the hill and gained the margin of a handsome park. There was little fear of his being seen and recognised at such an hour, but he would run no risk. Clambering over the rusty palings and keeping well out of sight of the house until he was within a few score yards of it, he came at last full in view of his old home.

Its lower rooms, from one wing to the other, were ablaze with light—many figures flitted past the windows—even at that distance the sound of music and happy voices reached his ear. It was no more than he had expected and prepared himself to see, but it irritated him painfully. If his resolve had needed strengthening, that sight before him would have confirmed it. With a bitter smile he was turning away, when his step faltered. It was hard, after all, to have come so far upon this Christmas Eve and seen so little of them. Years hence, in that new life which he should hasten to so gladly now, the thought of this lost opportunity might haunt and reproach him. He would steal round to a window of the east wing, under the clock-tower, through which he might see them without any risk of detection. It might have been a dangerous experiment a few hours back, but he felt himself strong enough now to look upon them for the last time, with no fear that any other weak impulse should unman him.

Crossing the courtyard stealthily, a dog leaped at him from his lair with a hoarse outcry. But the next moment, before his arm, uplifted to strike, could fall, the old hound had recognised him, and cowered before him, fawning upon him, and licking his clenched hand. He would not have believed that so simple an incident could have affected him so powerfully. But it did unman him thoroughly, and it was with an emotion he would have been ashamed for human eyes to see that he threw his arm over the dog's shaggy neck, and quieted him with an almost childish embrace.

A few more steps and he was in front of the old house again. Just then the sky was clear, and the moon shone bright and full upon the quaint roof and gables crusted deep with snow. It lay in heavy masses upon the avenue of solemn yews; it clothed grotesquely the quaint heraldic figures that were perched wherever a few feet of level building gave them vantage ground; each blade of the ivy that clung to the ripe, crumbling walls glistened with it; it marked the outline of the grand old windows, and delicately fringed each diamond pane.

Warily—almost stealthily, with bated breath and cautious step—the youthful figure crossed the terrace walk, the track of his footsteps sinking deep into the snow, and peered into the bright room. With a bitter smile at first, but soon with keen interest, his eye ranged among the gay figures. He recognised many. How tall John's children had grown since he saw them last! How grey his old Aunt Lotty began to look! and what a buxom, matronly figure was that of his little sister Lily, whom he had left a child! And how happy they all looked this Christmas Eve! He could not help noticing this again, but sadly, rather than bitterly, this time. He had seen enough, and would go now, but it would not be in anger.

But he found it hard to leave the old place yet. And as he looked back he saw that the clouds had gathered over the stars again, and that the snow was falling and filling up the tracks of his footsteps so fast that it almost seemed to him—another foolish fancy—that the very elements were in league against him, and were bent on urging him forward and barring his retreat. Although he smiled at the wildness of the thought, he humoured it so far as to take up his position by the window again and watch the gay, unconscious figures with greater interest than ever.

It was paining him very keenly to see such joy and lightheartedness in the old house from which he was self-exiled. However powerful the impulse had been that had led him to its threshold, once there, its influence had ceased. And yet, for all the pain he felt he was almost glad that it had ended so. For he could not help feeling now that if they had been submitted to too severe a trial his pride and resolution might after all have failed him. Now that it could not happen he did did not mind confessing to himself how hardly tried he should have been had he seen any evidence that his absence from among them was felt—any proof that his presence there would add to their seasonable joy. But he saw none. Upon not a face of that merry throng could he detect one symptom of regret or care. It was so clear that no thought of him was in any of their hearts that, as he bent forward to look again, the words almost rose to his lips, "If I could see even the slightest proof that I was not altogether forgotten and unlamented I might find it hard to break away from them, but there is none—none."

And yet the snow, as though it knew better, with eager haste was filling up his footmarks, and the wind hurrying clumsily to aid it, drifted down two little clouds of it from the roof so heedlessly, that a couple of the most important griffins on the premises found themselves baldheaded in an instant, and ramped above their shields more fiercely than ever.

Just then, as the parting figure bent forward for the last time, a burst of laughter rang through the crowded hall. As though some one had struck his white face a violent blow, he started back, and, with a bitter exclamation, turned to fly. But at that moment the old clock, high up in the turret, shook down a little shower of snow and struck the hour of midnight musically.

There was a fashion in that family—it occurred to him at once—that its members, old and young, should give each other greeting and good wishes upon the dawn of the holy day that had just commenced. The recollection of this custom checked him, and, bending forward, he peered into the hall again.

The gay groups had parted now, so he could look, as down an avenue of figures, to where two stood whom hitherto he had not seen. By the hearth, on which the smouldering logs gave out a rich, golden light, stood his father, older, greyer, perhaps, yet with the same upright presence and severe, proud face; and by his side a delicate, fragile figure, with features wan with secret hidden suffering. As the old man bent in almost formal fashion, saluting the companion of his long life, the wanderer peered wistfully into his mother's face, with the words in his heart again, if not upon his lips, "If I could see even now upon the face of one of these but the slightest proof that I was not altogether forgotten and unlamented upon this Christmas Eve."——

Ha! She had returned the pressure of her husband's hand and lips, but with little warmth. Wearily she looked upon the happy faces round—hers reflecting nothing of their mirth and gaiety—wistfully she gazed from them, away into the dark night, as for an absent face she missed and mourned. As her worn unconscious eyes met his, he saw how they wearied for him; how her wan lips trembled for his embrace, and her poor head drooped for the warmth and support of his strong heart. In that moment he forget all but her desolation and his love, and with a loud and passionate cry had started forward.

He did not notice the sudden awe that for the moment froze the gay figures to their places, nor the agitation and excitement that the next instant broke them up. The Prodigal had only eyes for the one poor face that turned to his, flushed with the glad joy of recognition, and the white arms that were stretched towards him in wild and longing welcome.

* * * * * * *

There went no footsteps across the snow from the old house that Christmas night.

WILLIAM J. STEWART.

## THE FIRST CHRISTMAS DAY IN ENGLAND.

IN the year of our Lord 597 Pope Gregory the Great dispatched the monk Augustine, with a chosen band of missionaries, to convert to Christianity the land of the Angles. Arrived in England, Augustine and his followers had an interview with Ethelbert, the powerful King of Kent. They came bearing a silver cross and offering up prayers. Ethelbert declined at that time to forsake the worship he had so long followed with his people, but allowed the missionaries publicly to preach their religion, and gave them a dwelling-place in his metropolis of Canterbury. In the end, Ethelbert, who had married Bertha, the Christian daughter of Claribert, King of the Franks, adopted the faith of his wife. The idea of promulgating the Christian doctrine among the English was first suggested to the good Pope Gregory, then a monk, by his seeing some beautiful Anglo-Saxon slaves exposed for sale in the market-place of Rome. He inquired the name of their country, and on being told they were Angles—Angli, "They have an angel mien," he said, "and it becomes such to be coheirs with the angels in heaven."]

THY pilgrim bands, old Rome! are on their way;
Thy silver cross shall span the barrier sea;
From out the ruin of thy fast decay
The light of nations shall be struck by thee.

The pagan fires die out; through all our clime
The sacrificial knives grow red with rust;
And with a touch, gentle and strong as time,
Our blood-stained altars crumble into dust!

The slavery of the soul long dragged its chain;
And faint the promise shone, and dim the day
Till love's blest smile had kindled it; in vain
Man's fiery zeal, till woman led the way.

Slowly, as children that first cross life's floor,
And with a faltering foot, the way was trod,
Ere yet Christ's newly-born threw wide the door,
And with untrammelled freedom walked with God.

Then burst His glory on the dazzled gaze
Of wondering heathens—and the "lost" was "found;"
Then rose the first heart-music of his praise,
The first soul-festival on English ground.

Forget not, O my country! her who led
A faltering nation to the one great goal;
Who stood, a living spirit midst the dead,—
The wise Frank Princess of the Christian soul.

A deathless name is hers; it stands enrolled
In noble memories; and, though unseen,
Her spirit walks this empire as of old:—
Thank God, my England! for a Christian Queen.

Go, tell her she may cast her sceptre down,
Clasping the cross; may fling aside her state,
Rich in that one best jewel of her crown
The faith that makes, and keeps, a nation great.

Not as in Rome—the city of old graves—
Stood the soul-orphans of our Saxon land,
Around her hearth, no heathens and no slaves,
The "angel-faces" of her children stand.

A Christian mother and a Christian wife,
She reads the lesson writ in Bertha's dust:
"No crown so noble as a noble life;
No throne like that which thrones a people's trust."

On all her shores a quickened pulse is bounding,
Like waves that beat upon a golden strand;
The same old pulse that, 'mid Hosannas sounding,
Hailed the first Christmas in a new-born land.

The same old music!—but O, deepened more
By martyr-voices;—spirit-notes that roll,
Thrilling our shadowy aisles from roof to floor,
Leaping from chord to chord—from soul to soul.

The same old blessing!—Bless THEE for the land
Of our deliverance; for each banquet spread,
Still, in His name, who, with unsullied hand,
Steeped in the cup of life our Saxon bread!

For altars and for homes where lingers yet
The ray of promise to the sages given,
Where love divine o'er every roof hath set
The star that guides us to the fields of heaven!

O, give us still, dear God! the light that keeps
One foot-track clear while treading earth's dark way;
Him who, benighted, mid the ice-blast sleeps,
Wake—till the snow-path brightens into day!

Take the poor heathen's captive spirit, Lord!
And ere thy hand shall break the "golden bowl,"
And ere thy touch shall loose the "silver cord,"
O give it back to him—a ransomed soul.

Our English air no slave may breathe; once pressed,
Our soil rends off the badge of his despair;
How shall he toil then in thy fields of rest;
How breathe, a slave, in thy diviner air?

Strike off his fetters; bow his stubborn knee,
Cramped with the shackles riveted too fast,
And lift, O lift, his darkened eyes to Thee
That they may drink thy living light at last!

Beautiful faith! whose martyrs smile in sleep,
Like children that in dreams the angels see,
Knowing how love immortally shall keep
Slain innocents around the Father's knee.

Beautiful faith! that casteth not a stone
Even at the guilty; breathes the lost one's breath;
And, where the arrow to the heart hath flown,
Sucks out the poison from the wound of death.

Beautiful faith! that, hovering o'er a world
Deluged in sorrow, droppeth like a dove,
And, stirring the dead waves with wings unfurled,
Drowns its blood-altars in a sea of love!

ELEANORA L. HERVEY.

## "CAUGHT."

Stolen kisses! stolen kisses!
O what precious spoil they are!
Whether cheek of sleeping miss is
Walnut-brown or lily-fair.
But, though dear the sweet possession,
They are but a tasteless sham
(Dare I make the bold confession?)
To a pot of stolen jam.

Stolen meetings! stolen meetings!
When our joy's half made of fear,
Worth an age of formal greetings—
Thou, the loved one, only near.
Yet time was, my Eleanora,
When we met by stealth, and made
Happiness from plumcake, or a
Pot of orange marmalade.

Stolen kisses when rejected
Ofttimes lead to wordy strife!
Stolen meetings when detected
Ofttimes chill a maiden's life!
So, when housekeeping duenna
"Caught" us foraging for "cram,"
Eleanora, salts and senna
Were our substitutes for jam! L.

## THE NIGHT MARCH OF THE VOLUNTEERS.

THE MUSIC BY W. M. BALFE.

STEP together! All together! Close together!
Remember this is holy earth
On which our measured footsteps tread—
The living land which gave us birth!
The dust of our immortal dead!

CHORUS.

Step together! All together!
Each man's true beside us;
Close together! Fall together!
Death can but divide us!

Step together! All together! Close together!
The happy spirits of our sires
Look down from yon bright stars above,
And from those orbs of quenchless fires
Light in our hearts a patriot love.
[*Chorus.*

Step together! All together! Close together!
The winds shall bear across the sea
The burden of our earnest song,—
Who hearing doubts we will be free?
Who knowing this dare do us wrong?
[*Chorus.*

Step together! All together! Close together!
They taunt us with our love of gold,
Our hate of blood, our love of peace;
We would not sell what they have sold
For even LIFE itself's increase.
[*Chorus*

Step together! All together! Close together!
Free mothers have not sung us lays,
Or read our history's page in vain;
The noble deeds of olden days,
When needed, we will do again.

CHORUS.

Step together! All together!
Each man's true beside us,
Close together! Fall together!
Death can but divide us. MARK LEMON.

## A CHRISTMAS CRACKER.

"O tell me, dear Louisa, why
Though Christmas you refuse my offer?
My broad lands unincumbered lie,
Well filled is my paternal coffer.

Already thrice on bended knee
I've popped, with words of true devotion,
And yet I find no love in thee,
And no reciprocal emotion.

Thou smilest sadly when I speak,
With half-averted, tearful, glances;
O why deny the boon I seek?
Why close thy heart to my advances?"

Thus spake I, full of love and grief;
Louisa answered, deeply sighing—
"I love thee, Fred, beyond belief;
With love, in fact, I'm almost dying.

I know thy lands are broad and fair,
And full is thy paternal coffer;
And yet, I fear me, I can ne'er
Accept thy advantageous offer.

It is not that thy hair is red;
Ah, no! I still could hold thee dear;
Nor that thou squintest so—but Fred,
Dear Fred! *thou'rt not a Volunteer!*"

## THE AWKWARD SQUAD.

Now our Christmas Eve drill's over, and to supper home we plod.
Comrades, listen while I sing the sorrows of the Awkward Squad,

Very sharp is Sergeant Gimlett, but his manner's rather blunt;
When he saw I'd got "a cast," he unpolitely cried "Eyes front!"

Though there's nothing queer about me, and my uniform's the best,
Gimlett said I was an "odd file"—told me that I wasn't "dressed."

But I shouldn't mind his bluntness—Sergeants will behave as such—
If he'd only mind his grammar: Gimlett's English might be Dutch.

"Rear" he tortures into *rare*—p-u-t he thinks spells *putt*,
And "foot," in some mysterious way, is metamorphosed into *fut*.

Ruthlessly he drops his h's—Oh, I do so wish he wouldn't!—
Then he picks them up again, and "putts" them everywhere he shouldn't.

Very sad it is to hear him as each harmless H he drops;
And, to add to my misfortune, Gimlett will not mind his stops.

Still I tried to understand him—tried at drill to do my best—
When he puts us through our "facings," wasn't duller than the rest.

But my eagerness to please him got me into sad disgrace;
When he gave the word to "Face!" I found that I was not to face.

"Has you were," said Sergeant Gimlett, quickly cooling down my zeal;
"Bring the oller of the right futt amart agin the hother eel."

"Then don't halter that position till you gets the horder tow."
(*Two* he meant, but he pronounced it as a perfect rhyme to cow.)

"Then jist rise the toes together, and turn smoothly on the eels."
Round we went, like weathercocks, as if we all had worked on wheels.

"Has you were!" roared Sergeant Gimlett, in a vicious manner now;
"*Will* you keep them bodies stiddy till I gives the horder tow."

Round, and round, and round he faced us, till our brains resembled starch
Then we tried the strange manœuvre soldiers learn before they march,

Called the balance-step or goose-step, neither appellation's wrong,
For only geese or acrobats could keep in such a posture long.

Each man stood upon his right leg, with the other in the air,
Swinging slowly to and fro, as Gimlett shouted "Front!" and "Rare!"

"Well," I muttered, "goose at table may be an attractive bird,
But to imitate his motion is, to say the least, absurd.

"Who that ever saw a gander waddling on his yellow shanks"—
"*Silence!*" bellowed our commander. "Oo's that talking in the ranks?"

Sergeant Gimlett's next injunction—though I'm not at all a glutton—
Coming after eels and goose, invited fleeting thoughts of mutton.

"When you march," said our instructor, "don't cast sheep's hoyes down on your breast;
"Old your ead hup; look before you; ave your shoulders nicely dressed.

"Keep the neck and loins from moving; don't, I beg, stick out the paunch;
Let the haction of the leg proceed directly from the aunch."

"March!" said Gimlett. Off we started in a long, uneven row;
And, I own, I thought the slow march most indubitably "slow."

Gimlett seemed to think so too. It does look stupid, I suppose,
When men at drill won't keep in step, and will forget to "pint" their toes.

Every now and then we "alted;" and, to rest our aching knees,
Gimlett kindly gave us leave to stand (as he explained) "at hease."

But his theory was a strange one. When at ease a person stands
He doesn't stamp his feet before him and insanely clap his hands.

Rather does he put them in the pockets of his pantaloons,
And whistles, pr'aps, a choice selection from his favourite opera tunes.

*My* pet vertical position—which most Englishmen admire—
Is when, upon my rug at home, I stand at ease before the fire.

Then, in truly British fashion—never doing things by halves—
With my coat-tails snugly tucked up, I serenely toast my calves.

Gimlett, I suppose, was right, though in a martial point of view;
And in Turkey, people say, we ought to do as turkeys do.

So I'll persevere at drill, although at first it's rather odd;
I daresay I shall like it better when I leave the Awkward Squad.

J. H. LUKIS.

### ACROSTIC ENIGMA.

I GREW depraved from one divided deed,
Slain by base Romans whom my arm had freed.
Naked, I put to flight marauding foes,
Save once a year, my jealous port I close.
To a cheap web my Indian name is given,
The deathless seer who reappeared from heaven,
I trust ripe Ceres to the Pontic flood,
Gauls made my pavement blush with Roman blood.
Though not a fish, I swim the Polar main;
For feeding David was my father slain.
With half a lisp I finish broccoli,
Nor sit erect until you give me tea,
For Diocletian planted herbs in me.

THE WORDS.
His country's hope across the wave is borne
To lands that from his ancestor were torn.

### CHARADE.—No. 21.

Without those eyes of heavenly blue
My First, dear girl, you could not do.
Without those hundred teeth so keen,
My Second never could have been.
My Whole hath given great delight
To many a rustic maid and wight.

NIGHT MARCH AT CHRISTMAS-TIDE OF THE RIFLE VOLUNTEERS.—DRAWN BY HARRISON WEIR, 1ST SURREY RIFLES

"CAUGHT!"

"A MERRY CHRISTMAS!"

## THE FONT AND THE FLOWERS.

In a recent lecture on the causes of the French Revolution the lecturer, whilst examining the position of Necker when he was called to the helm for the last time, mentioned, amongst the other difficulties with which he had to contend, the fact that he was too much idolised by his own family. A clever wife and a brilliant daughter (afterwards Mdme. de Staël) erected an altar on the domestic hearth, upon which the flattered father was placed, and made the idol of their daily devotion. Everything which he did must be right.

Generalising from this particular instance, the lecturer advised the air hearers, who for med the larger portion of his audience, to take care never to fall into a similar error, assuring them that this species of worship had a most injurious effect upon the character of the male sex.

It is possible that some of our readers may imagine that there is a great deal to be said on the other side of the question; in fact, that the conversation of some ladies would rather have the effect of impressing their male relatives with a painful sense of inferiority, a state of mind which might also militate against success.

But it will be generally admitted that there is one class of men who are placed on dangerous pedestals by the united action of the female population.

A curate in a metropolitan parish who has neither wife nor daughter to worship him is exposed to the greatest danger of undue exaltation from the extraneous admiration of all the single ladies in the place.

If a young lady thinks that a gentleman in any other position is handsome and agreeable, and that he has a particularly sweet voice, it is not usual for her to mention the circumstance; but it is quite evident that some special law renders any reticence on these points unnecessary if the individual in question happens to be a clergyman.

When Fred Stanhope was first appointed to St. Ethelred's he might very frequently be found at No. 8, Sunmouth-terrace, the residence of Mrs. Bexley and her daughter Emily.

Mrs. Bexley was the widow of a former incumbent, and was a great authority on all parish matters. When Fred was called suddenly to take the place of his uncle, who had been ordered abroad for some months for the benefit of his health, he was very glad to find some one whom he could consult.

He had only been about a year in the Church, and had just taken priest's orders, when he exchanged the quiet of a Yorkshire curacy for the bustle of a London parish. Mrs. Bexley was a distant cousin of his father, and the only person he knew when he arrived. But he soon found the assistance of Miss Emily even more useful than the advice of her mother. She prevented him from becoming too easily the prey of those elderly females whose especial complaint always required a nourishing diet and port wine. She warned him against delegating any authority for collecting subscriptions to Mrs. Screwnham, who was strongly suspected of being more ready to extract them than to pay over the balance to the proper quarter. She sketched for him the characters of the school-teachers, pointing out those who required to be looked after pretty sharply and those who got on best without much interference. During the last three years of her father's lifetime, and during the two years Mr. Stanhope had been the Incumbent of St. Ethelred's she had been constantly engaged in parish work.

Frederick Stanhope was a handsome and agreeable young man, and soon became very popular in the parish. There would be some difficulty in defining accurately the "Church party" to which he belonged. Possibly he may have approached the type of the parson of former days, before the terms "High Church and Low Church, Broad Church and Hard Church," were known in Christian England. He was fond of good music, and took some interest in church architecture; therefore common report pronounced him "high." His earnest desire was to do his duty to the best of his ability—"to visit the widow and the fatherless in their affliction, and keep himself unspotted from the world." He was never at a loss for cheering words beside the bed of sickness or of death, and he knew when to administer a timely reproof. He had nothing of the ascetic in his nature, and seldom exchanged a greeting without a smile upon his face. There were some who said that when he crossed the threshold he brought the sunshine with him.

Constant intercourse with such a man could scarcely be without its danger to a young lady of two-and-twenty, whose heart had till then remained scatheless. When Emily found that her advice was now seldom sought, and that Stanhope's visits to Sunmouth-terrace were becoming "few and far between," she could not suppress the consciousness of a pang, those hours spent in doing good together had been so happy; it had been such a delight to be consulted by one who was so anxious to do what was right and so ready to take the advice he sought; and she had recognised the power of the mind she had been allowed to sway—the nobility which is never ashamed to learn or to acknowledge its obligations to its instructors. And now she only saw him perhaps once a week, instead of three times a day.

Amongst other houses at which Frederick visited was that of Mr. Symonds, a pious banker. Mr. Symonds was a widower, and rejoiced in the possession of five blooming daughters, the Demoiselles Adeliza, Angelina, Clementina, Georgina, and Rosetta Symonds. Owing to their papa's views on those points these young ladies were not able to get nearly as much dancing as they would have liked, and they were never allowed to go to the Opera. Now, young ladies, like young gentlemen, usually remain awake a certain number of hours. If they go to bed at four in the morning it is probable that they will be dressed by two in the afternoon; but if they seek their couch at ten at night they may be found stirring as early as eight the next day. While they are up they must be employed. Berlin wool, knitting, and crochet, from the little square books of algebraic instructions on these matters, will only account for a certain number of hours. The time must be filled up. Debarred from evening amusements under paternal pressure, the Demoiselles Symonds betook themselves to district-visiting. And they got through it very well; as gay, graceful, good-tempered, kind-hearted, sensible English girls do with most things which they undertake, even without any special qualifications for success. It is possible that the advent of a handsome and agreeable curate gave an impetus to their efforts in this direction.

It is certain that in his ministry Stanhope found himself brought into contact with one or other of the blooming sisters at every turn. If he had once been inclined to seek Emily Bexley's advice a little oftener than was absolutely necessary, the Misses Symonds nobly avenged her cause. Like the disturbers of the clerks in the Circumlocution Office, they were always "wanting to know." Georgina and Rosetta had not yet been confirmed, and the anxiety of their elder sisters that they should be fully prepared was really beautiful.

There is a dangerous fascination about that process of elevation to a pedestal—dangerous for the general in the acclamations of his men; dangerous for the orator in the cheers of his party; dangerous for the cricketer in the applause of the ground;—yet these are only the flatteries that rough men can offer. What shall we say of the peril when the soft, sweet voice of woman doubly gilds the meshes of the net?

It was early in the autumn when Frederick came to St. Ethelred's, and now Christmas was drawing nigh. For years past a great deal of trouble had been taken in the decoration of St. Ethelred's for Christmas by Mrs Alvanley, a widow lady, who occupied a leading position in the parish The beautiful old church had been made an object of general interest in the neighbourhood on these occasions. But Mrs. Alvanley had died during the last summer, and Frederick was very anxious that there should be no falling off in the decorations during his ministry.

The Misses Symonds had offered their services, and one afternoon when Emily Bexley paid them a visit she found them discussing the subject in family conclave.

"Do you know, Emily," said Adeliza, "we think it will be such an improvement this year? Mr. Stanhope is going to get some flowers to mix with the laurel and the holly."

"Mr. Raynham has promised some of his dear camellias. Won't it be jolly?" interposed Rosetta.

"For shame, Rose! What words you use. I cannot imagine where you learn them," reproved Clementina.

"You shut up!" replied Rose. "I heard you say it yourself, and tell Angy that Captain Annesley was a brick, which is much worse."

Miss Clementina deigned no answer to this sally, but only threw up her hands in horror at the accusation.

"You know those darling-striped camellias?" said Georgina.

"I think it is a pity you are going to use any flowers," said Emily. "The church has always looked very beautiful before with the simple evergreens, you know, and so many people have such an objection to flowers."

"What difference can there be between flowers and leaves?" said Adeliza. "They both belong to the vegetable kingdom."

At this juncture Frederick Stanhope was announced. When he had paid his respects to the young ladies he said, "Well, I think I have got everything ready for us to begin the decorations to-morrow. The laurels, and the holly, and the ivy, and the box and yew, are all come. Mr. Raynham won't have the flowers cut till to-morrow morning, that they may be fresher. Miss Adeliza, I shall rely upon you to superintend the decorations of the altar, and perhaps Miss Rosetta will help you. Miss Angelina, under your charge I must place the pillars and arches of the north side; Miss Clementina the south side; and to you, Miss Georgina, I intrust the organ, of which you are so fond." And here he paused.

The five young ladies all began to talk at once, and to request Frederick's opinion on their respective plans for performing the duties assigned to them.

Emily Bexley could not help thinking that Frederick might have asked her assistance—that a month before he never did anything without consulting her. She did an injustice, however. At that moment she could not think—she could only feel.

"For you, Miss Emily," Frederick resumed, "I have reserved an especial duty, if you will be so kind as to undertake it. When I was in town for a few days last Christmas I went to St. Martha's, and, amongst all the decorations, I was especially struck by the font. On the cover was built a little mount of flowers, crowned by a cross composed entirely of red and white camellias."

"If you will undertake to ornament our font on similar principles I think we can spare you flowers enough."

Emily blushed. For a moment she was unable to reply.

"Miss Rosetta burst out immediately, "Oh, it is no use for you to ask Emily: she has just been saying that it was wicked to put flowers n a church at all."

"I did not say that, Rosetta: I said that there were some people in the parish whom it might offend."

"Only the stupids," suggested Georgina.

"Then I am afraid I must not count upon your assistance, Miss Bexley?"

Emily bowed.

This refusal threw a gloom over the party, for Emily was a great favourite, and they were all accustomed to respect her opinion.

She soon rose to go, and Frederick found that it was time for him also to be going homewards.

Once more they walked arm in arm together.

"Do you really think there is any harm in our using flowers in the decorations?" inquired Frederick.

"Of course I know there is no harm in the flowers themselves," she replied, "but I am sure there are a great many people in the parish who will think there is."

"But don't you think Georgy was right in suggesting that they would be stupid for their pains; and, if the thing is right in itself, do you think we ought to pay any attention to such silly scruples?"

"I think," replied Emily, "that a clergyman should always avoid doing anything which is unimportant in itself that would be likely to weaken his influence in his parish. By such a course he cuts off his opportunities of doing good. He offends the prejudices of the weaker brethren. You must remember," she continued after a short pause, "that you look at these questions as a highly-educated man, with the broad and liberal views which are current among men of your own stamp. But there are very few of your parishioners who can appreciate your eclecticism. You were explaining to me the other day how impossible it was for a politician to shape his course without compromise. Do you not think you ought to bear this in mind in such questions as the one we are now discussing? You know I could never advise you to yield a point where your duty was really involved, but surely it cannot be in such a matter as this."

Though reckoned a good debater at "The Union" in his undergraduate days, on this occasion Frederick Stanhope was found utterly unable to reply. He was scarcely sorry that another fifty yards brought them to Sunmouth-terrace.

"Well," he said, as they shook hands in parting, "I hope that you will not refuse to come and look at us, even though we must not count upon your assistance."

"If I can help you with the evergreens in hanging the church after the old fashion, I shall be very happy," she replied.

Fred could not help thinking that the laurels certainly belonged to the lady, but his pride did not permit him to say so. And so they parted.

The next morning the Demoiselles Symonds were stirring at an early hour. It was seldom that more than one of them appeared to superintend their father's breakfast. But, on this occasion, to his intense surprise, they were all down before him. He thought he must have made a mistake in the hour, and looked at his repeater in affright. But he was soon reassured when he heard the cause of the early appearance they had put in.

Immediately after breakfast they adjourned to St. Ethelred's, where Frederick joined them, and they set to work at once. Stanhope's office was no sinecure that morning. He had appointed himself side-de-camp and orderly to the five sisters, and they found plenty for him to do. Whenever he was assisting one the other four called out, "Mr. Stanhope!" with singular unanimity. Yet not one of the fair five appeared to have the power of enchaining his attention thoroughly. His eyes were constantly turning to the vestry-door, the only means of access to the church which had been left open. At last they were gratified. About twelve o'clock Miss Bexley arrived. She made a progress round the church, and admired the work of each young lady in turn. At last she said to Frederick, who was standing a little apart,

"And where are the flowers?"

"Well, do you know," he replied, "after we parted yesterday I thought over all you had been saying to me? I believe I was thinking about it nearly all night, and I came to the conclusion that you were quite right. So I went off, the first thing this morning, to Mr. Raynham, and told him we should not want the flowers, and explained to him the reason, not as well as you would have done, though. He seemed disappointed at first, for he is very proud of his camellias, but he quite agreed with us after we had talked it over a little. He is a kind-hearted old fellow. He said he should consider the flowers the property of the church all the same, and send them to Covent Garden to be sold, and give me the money to buy blankets for the old women."

To this Miss Emily made no reply. The fact was that a choking sensation in her throat prevented her from speaking with the same eloquence with which she had lectured Fred on the previous evening.

Accordingly she occupied herself in assisting the young ladies in their decorations. Though they accepted her services most graciously they did not call out for her as loudly as they had shouted for Mr. Stanhope before her arrival.

At last the moment arrived when everybody seemed inclined to admit that lunch would form an appropriate interlude.

The Misses Symonds were very anxious that the whole party should lunch at their house; but Miss Bexley had promised to return and to take an early dinner with her mother, who was not very well; and Mr. Stanhope found it was absolutely necessary that he should return to his lodgings to fetch some more cord and nails, of which they were beginning to run short.

Rose began to mutter audibly "that it was all bosh, for they could have sent 'Buttons,' but that he only wanted to walk home with Emily Bexley, who was quite big enough to go by herself," when she was with great difficulty hustled into propriety by the crinoline of her elder sisters.

There is reason to fear that Rose's criticism, although severe, was nevertheless just, for the reverend gentleman did walk home with Miss Bexley, and when he returned, more than two hours afterwards, he had forgotten all about the cord and the nails.

When they had gone a little way together, Emily had mustered up sufficient courage to express the approval she had been unable to utter in the church.

"I am so glad," she said, "about the flowers."

"And I am doubly glad," he replied, "because it is right, and because it has pleased you."

It has been mentioned that there was a second reason which had caused Fred's visits to Sunmouth-terrace to become less frequent, besides the fact that the number of his acquaintances had increased. He felt that he was beginning to like Emily Bexley too well. He was forced to admit to himself that it was possible his feelings might be reciprocated. It is a curious thing that young men generally form magnaminous resolutions upon these points when it is just a little too late.

Adolphus, lounging in his easy-chair, and staring fixedly at the lighted end of his cigar, conscientiously soliloquises thus:—

"Now, this won't do, young man; you know you have not got even the three hundred a year which the economical *Times* correspondent has selected as the matrimonial minimum. You can't ask Lucy to come and share this doghole." And he flings the end of his cigar at the hole in the ceiling. "You must cut Dashdash-square, my young friend, for the next month or so. That's what you must do."

And, perhaps, he ceases to haunt that locality.

All very well, my Adolphus; admirably reasoned-out result! nobly-fulfilled resolution! But why did not you think of this about three weeks before? before that half hour in the conservatory at Lady Longcroft's ball, when Lucy forgot all about the partners to whom she was engaged for three dances; when your long whiskers and her fair curls might have been plaited into one tress, so close they drooped together? before that picnic when you took such care of her during the return home—you were afraid she would catch cold? For shame

So it was too late when Mr. Frederick Stanhope decided that he had better decrease the number of his visits at Mrs. Bexley's.

There are one or two little things which put resolutions of this kind to a very severe test. Amongst these we may mention a little trembling in the lady's voice, or the faintest semblance of a tear in her eye, during an accidental meeting. If, in addition to this, circumstances have rendered it necessary for her to take the arm of the gentleman, and the little frame should tremble as well as the voice the conditions of his trial will be pretty nearly complete.

The last sentence which Frederick spoke had the immediate effect of placing him beneath the guns of the battery which has just been described. Suddenly all his ideas seemed to undergo a change, like the dissolving view which brightens imperceptibly from winter into summer. The capabilities of two hundred and fifty pounds a year expanded without a limit. He felt certain that there must be many women who would prefer sharing every hardship with the man they loved to living haunted by the remembrance of a rosy dream without a chance of its realisation. A sudden impulse urged him to try whether Emily was not one of these.

"After all, do you know," he said, "it is curious that you should object to flowers under any circumstances, they seem to belong to you so much. I have been thinking that, of all those I have ever seen, you would be best able to strew the path of life with flowers—so thickly, too, that its thorns would be neither seen nor felt. Dare I ask you to do this for me—to brighten my path by walking ever by my side?"

Five years of hard work in a London parish had given Emily Bexley some insight into the mysteries of human life. She had seen poverty and all the hardships it entails. Perhaps she may have seen, also, that happiness is not the exclusive possession of the rich. What answer did she make to the curate?

Lest the good reputation of our heroine should be compromised, we leave our fair readers to answer the question according to their own ideas of propriety.

Herbert Vaughan.

## CHARADES FOR CHRISTMAS.

### No. 1.

THE taper was burning a lurid blue,
The logs on the hearth had ceased to flame;
And Fancy quick on the dream-wings flew
To the old, old scenes, and their tales of shame!
The tapestry figures loom'd grandly there,
The lattice creak'd in the winter blast;
Oh, how I sigh'd for the morning fair!
Oh, how I pray'd that the night was past!
I long'd, yet I fear'd, to know the worst,
And with trembling awe looked round — my First.

I had heard the tale by the Christmas fire
In the brave sweet days when I was young;
I knew how the fiend had tempted the squire;
I knew the pool where the corse was flung!
So young and so pure! Ah, the raven curls!
Ah, the snowy brow! Ah, the deep dark eyes!
Oh me, how my brain with the fancy swirls;
How my heart beats quick with a dread surprise!
And I shrink as if a ghost-hand beckon'd.
She comes, she comes! Can it be my Second?

Hark! A tap at the door on the silence falls;
And the casement rattles; the cold winds shriek.
Whose voice is it now on Sir Walter calls?
Does the murder'd one her murderer seek?
"To the moated grange," I cry, "Begone!
Nor make me still your pitiless mock!"
But the voice is pitched in a louder tone—
"Hot water, Sir; and it's seven o'clock!"
So I woke, I know, with a cheerful soul;
And a fitting *backsheesh* rewarded my Whole.

### No. 2.

What every hungry patriot needs
When loudest, longest in his cry—
"This heart for my poor country bleeds!
In *me* behold her saviour! Try!"
What bears aloft the magic wires,
To speed through air the swift behest;
Whence gallant soldier ne'er retires,
Though gleaming blades are at his breast;
*That* is my First; when yours is gain'd,
Never neglect the good attain'd.

What every one pretends to be;
What mannikins and pigmies hate;
For what the poet anxiously
Through years of wistful hope must wait;
No "thing of shreds and patches;" ne'er
By dext'rous tailor deftly made,
But quick all good to bravely dare,
Of all that's evil e'er afraid;—
Still its bright course the world runs round,
But seldom is my Second found.

My Whole in toiling, busy streets—
In every cottage-dotted lane—
Love-errands day by day repeats,
Or bitter warnings bears again.
How dreaded oft! With joyous eye
Long-parted friends his coming wait,
While others heave the choking sigh,
And feel he is their certain fate.
But, fear'd or shunn'd, he hastens still
To do the work of—Rowland Hill!

### No. 3.

Oh, merrily the music throbs from every golden string,
And whirling swift, the dancers move and trip it to and fro;
And surely ne'er before had Time so very swift a wing
As now, when Love's young eyes are bright, and Beauty's roses glow!
And she is there. Ah, lovely fair! my First, why still remain,
When thousands sigh, and vow they'd die "*one* smile from thee" to gain?

The wigwams cluster in the shade of many a forest tree,
And blithely there the red men dart their all-unerring spears:
They hunt the bison o'er the plain, the hart upon the lea,
And still above the rest his plume my Second proudly rears.
So ruled his sire, a heart of fire, deep in that forest lone—
The spear his Regal rod, a knoll of blossom'd turf his throne.

But lo! my Second o'er the sea speeds to fair England's strand,
And there my First is woo'd and won—a bright but daring bride;
They seek the leafy forest depths, the red man's ancient land,
And wander through the woodlands dim and o'er the prairies wide.
But, sooth to tell, it is not well such bridals e'er should be—
When pale-faced First my Second weds my Whole you soon will see.

### No. 4.

In the merry greenwood, the greenwood free,
Oh, the golden sun glows brightest there!
And the leaflet dances upon the tree,
And the brooklet laughs in its woodland lair.
In the merry greenwood, the greenwood free,
'Tis joyous enough when night-clouds rise;
When the quick drops patter so cheerilie,
And my First descends from the bounteous skies.
Oh, the greenwood free!

In the merry greenwood, the greenwood free,
As long as poets have leave to sing,
Shall Marian raise her song of glee,
Shall bold Robin Hood be the forest king.
In the merry greenwood, the greenwood free,
Shall my Second of stalwart yew be made,
And stout arms bend it lustilie
At the antler'd pride of the blossomy glade.
O, the greenwood free!

In the merry greenwood, the greenwood free,
The sweet summer light will pass away,
And the glory lapse from each groaning tree,
And the night-clouds fold o'er the dying day.
In the merry greenwood, the greenwood free,
The skies shall threaten, the rain shall fall;
But *again* shall hope rise cheerilie,
And my Whole in its promise shall smile on all.
Oh, the greenwood free!

### No. 5.

"Daughter of mine, I'm bound for a ride—
Bound for a ride to Nottingham town;
There's a vagrant oaf to be tried, to be tried—
Oh, I would not fail to be there for a *crown!*
Nay, not for a *mark* would I fail to be there,
For law must rule and justice be done;
So I leave thee at home, my daughter fair,
That the cows may be milk'd and the wool be spun.
But look thou well that thou dost not show
Thyself at the glaring casement-pane,
Or saucy Sir Hugh will be up, I trow,
To some of his malapert tricks again!"
Then the creaking stairs he stumbled down,
And he mounted my First, a roadster brown,
And off he rode to Nottingham town.

Bold Sir Hugh saw the old man ride
Away on my First to Nottingham town;
And his heart beat quick, with a throb of pride,
And he laughed a laugh and he frown'd a frown:
"Eleanor loves me well," said he,
"And why should the miser cross our love?
Eleanor's smile is sweet to see;
Eleanor's eyes are the eyes of a dove!"
Oh, love, I trow, is swift to ride!
She's *there*, at the glaring casement-pane,
And bold Sir Hugh is by her side,
At some of his malapert tricks again;
For he begs my Second, of sunny brown,
From the rich, rare curls, her beauty's crown,
While the miser is off to Nottingham town.

There is no one *now* at the casement-pane,
And Sir Hugh is away on his mettled roan;
He spurs him fast o'er valley and plain,
For bold Sir Hugh does not ride alone;
"Wilt thou ever be true?" sweet Eleanor sighs;
"Can I ever be false?" says the brave Sir Hugh,
And so deep is the love in his earnest eyes,
She feels that, indeed, he *will* ever be true.
Now, the miser returned to his home; and—*he swore!*
Oh Mary, his wrath was fearful to see!
"Had the Whole been fast on the chamber door,
This evil had never befallen me!
But there's law to be had," he said, with a frown,
As the creaking stairs he tumbled down,
And he rode again to Nottingham town!

### No. 6.

The soldier woke from his long deep sleep
At the sound of the bugle's call;
His mates were alive by the little low pump;
At the gate was the sentry tall:
The sun-flash danced through the barrack-yard,
At the scouring of barrel and blade;
And rank and file were at it hard
Preparing for parade.

If our friend had awoke *ere* the bugle blew
It might have been better for him,
As soon, from the sulky looks, he knew
Of the corporal, gaunt and grim.
A martinet's look is sour at best,
And here it was far from the worst;
He was marched to the guardhouse under arrest
For too sparing a use of my First.

Ah! luckless wight! by his trimmings white
Thus out of trim, betrayed.
Yet his evil fate can be no excuse
For the fool of himself that he made.
To *name* my First, in whose use he failed,
It costs a compound word,
And the form in which his wrath prevailed
Is something quite absurd.

He wished that the corporal's mess that day
Were a dinner of that First,
With the tankard dry, and the canteen closed
Against such a banquet's thirst.
He cursed my First in its double term,
And he cursed the ground that bore it,
And, whate'er to my First belonged, he poured
A malediction o'er it.

But when, his ire in part subdued,
In the guardhouse he reclined,
Can you guess the course our friend pursued
For the easing of his mind?
He took the double term he'd damned,
And he turned it upside down,
And the thing that then it named was a spell
To bear his curses down.

He paid himself with the name reversed
For what the name had cost,
And so, through my Second, his soul regained
The peace through my First it lost.
And my Second he blessed in its double term,
And he blessed the ground that bore it.
And, whate'er to my Second belonged, he poured
A soldier's blessing o'er it.

### No. 7.

More logs on the hearth, more wine in the bowl,—
Let Christmas be here in each heart—in each soul!
Here's a puzzle to twit ye; come, riddle me ree,
When best should "a scholard" discern letter G?
Says Lily, her eyes with sweet mirth brimming bright,
"Why truly, good sir, when the G is in *siGht!*"
Oh, mischievous beauty, your First does you credit;
What a smile on those rose-budding lips as you said it!

So the jest and the song flow around as unbidden,
While Florence sits there, in the night shadows hidden.
My Second is still on her lap, but unheeded,—
Surely *knitting* and *netting* are not always needed!
Her dreams roam afar, and a passionate feeling
Of bitter despair to her soul is revealing
The depth of her madness for *him*, the deceiver,
Who won her young heart, and could cruelly leave her!

She knows not, she heeds not, that Walter sits near,
His heart all a tremble with tenderest fear;
Her dreams roam afar, and for *him*—not a thought!
Ah, me! in what blindness our passions are wrought!
Love may think it can read the Beloved One's soul!
Poor love, poor vain boaster, it is but my Whole;
As now when young Walter (ah! pity his madness!)
Believes that for *him* is sweet Alice's sadness.

### No. 8.

All things that be have a being good,
And yet, as a thing accursed,
The heart of man, in its human mood,
Still shrinks from my creature First;
For he finds my first in the rose's breast,
When it pines on its stem away,
And it makes of the lips he loves the best
A horror and a prey.

He may light on my First at the elm-tree's roots,
As he sits in my Second's shade,
With a heart all tuned to the winged flutes
That are piping overhead;
But it hints of the elm in a sadder scene,
'Mid a silence far away,
Where the shadows are not, like my Second's, green,
And my first is at fouler play.

Yet times there are, for the burning heart,
When my Second has no shade—
When man little recks of the loathliest part
My First has ever played;
For the heavy sleep in the hewn-down tree
Is the thirst of the weary soul,
That has known how the drink of the heart may be
More bitter than my Whole.

### No. 9.

A maiden sat, in the shadow of trees,
In the shadow of hoar, ancestral trees;
There rippled beneath, with a burden quaint,
And a song, like young love's whisperings faint,
An elfin stream, 'mid the purple bowers,
All rich with its freight of floating flowers!
While the maiden sang, alone, alone,
As a bud from its stalk was rudely blown,
"Oh, love is the joy of life's bright dream;
Bring the blossom to me, thou happy stream!"
She sang—my First!

On rippled the stream in the shadow of trees,
In the shadow of hoar, ancestral trees;
And it bore away on remorseless wave
To some distant isle, some haunted cave,
The struggling blossom for which she sighed;
Ah! why should the blossom from beauty glide?
Then she wreathed my Second with ivy green,
And she sang with a mournful voice, I ween,
"Oh, love is the cloud in life's sad dream;
Bear the blossom away, thou changeful stream!"
As she decked—my Second!

On rippled the stream in the shadow of trees,
In the shadow of grey, ancestral trees;
When sudden the sunlight leapt from the sky,
Like the happy glow of a lovelit eye;
And it shone on the leaf and it dimpled the wave,
And flash'd its warm glance to the innermost cave!
Then caroll'd the maiden, in joyousest tone,
As full on her bosom the splendour shone,
"Tho' love be a falsehood, life a dream,
Yet the sunshine will fall on the darkest stream!"
So sang—my Whole!

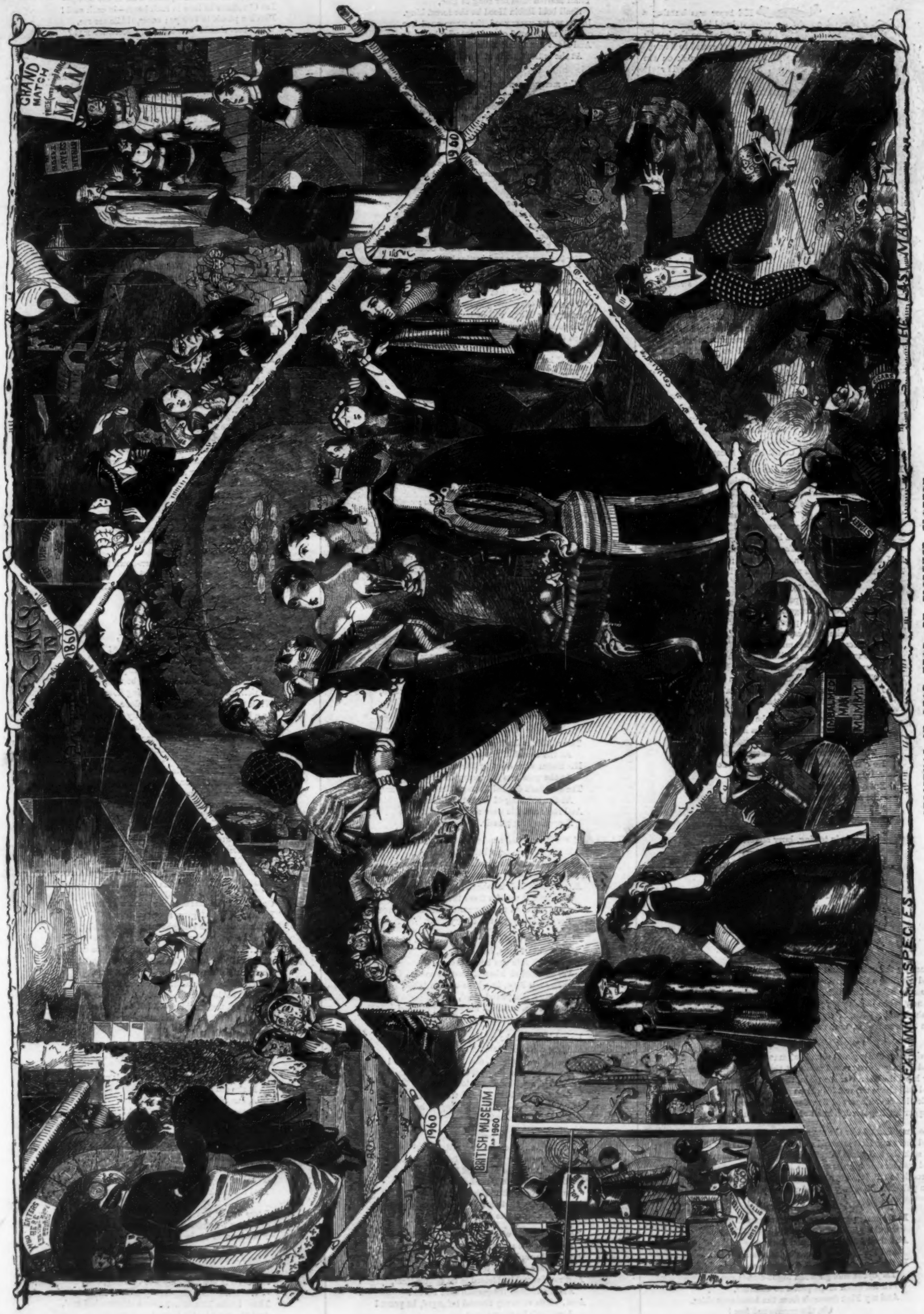
### No. 10.

I call on the early dead!
And my own heart's heavy sigh,
Wherever that prayer of the heart is said,
Is the sad and sole reply.
Yet, out of the sigh a hope is nurst,
And that hope has a symbol—which is my First.

I pace the ship on a tossing wave,
With a foaming, angry sea;
Beneath its keel lies a yawning grave,
And breakers are on the lee.
Yet there, towards the rock, my heart is beckoned,
And that rock has a name—which is my Second.

I toss on the waves of the inner world,
Where we strike on sunken woes,
And the gear of the heart is reefed and furled
In every storm that blows.
I hear the song which the sirens sing
When the beam is at play with the breeze,
And I sit in the dark, my woe to wring,
When the heart ships heavy seas.
Then, I take THE WORD, like a shipwrecked soul,
And the weary spirit hath found my Whole.

CHRISTMAS IN LEAP YEAR.—BY PEDESTRIS OLIVIUS.



POETRY BY MARK LEMON, ESQ. MUSIC COMPOSED BY M. W. BALFE.

*Allegretto Moderato.*

1. Step to - ge - ther! all to - ge - ther! close, close to - ge - ther! Re-
2. Per-
3. The
4. They

*pp*

mem - ber this is ho - ly earth On which our mea-sur'd footsteps tread— The liv - - ing land which gave us birth! . . . . . The dust of
chance the spi - rits of our sires Look down from yon bright stars a-bove, And from those orbs of quenchless fires, . . . . . Light in our
wind shall bear a-cross the sea The bur - den of our earn-est song— Who hear - - ing, doubts we will be free! . . . . . Who know-ing
taunt us with our love of gold, Our hate of blood, our love of peace; We would not sell what they have sold . . . . For e - ven

our im - mort - al dead!
hearts a pa - triot love.
this, dare do us wrong?
life it self's in - crease.

*Same time.* *cres.*

*pp* Step to - ge-ther, all to - ge - ther, Each man's true be - side us; Close to - ge - ther! fall to - ge - ther!

*cres.* *Same time.*

*staccato.* *pp*

CORO. *f*

Death can but di - vide us. Step to - ge - ther, all to - ge - ther, Each man's true be-side us, Close to - ge - ther, fall to - ge - ther, Death can but di - vide

*ff*

𝄋 *Fifth verse.*

us. Step to - ge - ther.

*f* *p* *dim.* *pp*

all to - ge - ther! close, close to - ge - ther! Free mo - thers have not sung us lays, Or read our hist'ry's page in

vain; The no - ble deeds of old - en days, . . . . . When needed, we will do a - gain. *Same time.* *pp* Step to - ge - ther!

*cres.* *staccato.* *Same time.* *pp*

*cres.* Coro. *f*

all to - ge - ther! Each man's true be - side us; Close to - ge - ther! fall to - ge - ther, Death can but di - vide us. Step to - ge-ther, all to - ge - ther,

*ff*

Each man's true be - side us, Close to - ge - ther, fall to - ge-ther, Death can but di - vide . . . . us.

*ff*

## EPITOME OF NEWS—FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC.

An investiture of the Bath took place at Windsor Castle on Saturday last.

Last year the revenue from "Conscience money" amounted to £16,488.

The representatives of the States on the banks of the Rhine, assembled in convention, have considerably reduced the river dues.

The Rev. Dr. Henry Philpott has been appointed to the Bishopric of Worcester, vacant by the death of Dr. Henry Pepys.

The Queen has appointed William Young, Esq., to be Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Province of Nova Scotia.

A public well-pump in the Gothic style has been erected on Tottenham-green, from the design of Mr. P. P. Marshall.

The *Globe* announces that, according to present arrangements, Parliament will meet on Tuesday, the 5th of February.

The Crystal Palace Poultry Show, which closed last Saturday afternoon, was in all respects the most successful of any held at the Palace.

Mr. Norman Robert Pogson has been appointed Astronomer at the Madras Presidency.

A medal and gratuity of £5 have been presented to Private J. Colbourn, of the 37th Regiment, for good conduct and long service.

Lord Bloomfield, British Ambassador to Vienna, and Lord Napier, Ambassador to St. Petersburg, are about to be raised to the rank of Privy Councillors.

The Hon. E. M. Erskine is appointed Secretary of Embassy at Constantinople, in succession to Mr. Savile Lumley, who is appointed Secretary of Embassy at St. Petersburg.

Baron de Belcastel, First Secretary of the French Legation at Berlin, has been the victim of a robbery to the extent of 6000f., and all the crosses and decorations which he possessed.

Last Saturday the *Amalia*, a splendid screw steam-frigate built for the Greek Government, was successfully launched at the premises of Mr. Henry S. Pitcher, Northfleet Dockyard. The *Amalia* is intended to carry thirty-six guns, and is of 1000 tons burden.

The *Morning Star* states, "on the best authority," that the whole of the claims on Garibaldi on account of the British Legion have been met by the Sardinian Government.

The National Life-boat Institution has sent one of its best single-banked life-boats, accompanied with a transporting carriage, to Portrush, on the north coast of Ireland.

At the Grand Opera in Paris the fees, which used to decrease in ratio after the fortieth night's performance, are now fixed permanently at the sum of 500 francs.

A silver bugle has been purchased by subscription for presentation to the Central Rifle Volunteers (40th Middlesex), as a testimonial from the inhabitants of the Holborn district.

The distribution of prizes to the students of Queen's College, Birmingham, took place on Wednesday, the 12th inst., the Earl of Lichfield, Principal, presiding.

An Italian newspaper, called the *Echo*, long printed at Fiume, has been suppressed for having recommended the amalgamation of that small port with Hungary.

During the last year the value of the book exports of France amounted to more than half a million sterling. Among the importing countries England is second on the list and Belgium first.

Lieutenant-Colonel Tatton has been entertained at dinner by his brother officers, in celebration of his appointment as Lieutenant-Colonel of the 3rd Battalion of Cheshire Rifle Volunteers.

The head-mastership of Nottingham Grammar School has been conferred upon the Rev. Frederick Tooling Cusins, M.A., of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, second master of Botcler's Grammar School, Warrington.

We learn that the Marquis Mario de Candia, father of the celebrated tenor, M. Mario, has been appointed by King Victor Emmanuel, Commander-in-Chief of the military division of the island of Sardinia.

The second annual show of the Hampshire Ornithological Association took place last week at Southhampton, and proved a great success. Between 300 and 400 cages, containing 1000 birds, were sent to the exhibition.

The President of the Royal Society has appointed the following gentlemen Vice-Presidents for the ensuing year:—General Sabine, Sir J. Boileau, Bart.; T. Graham, Esq.; and Sir H. Holland, Bart.

The Prussian Government contemplate erecting a bust of Bessel, the well-known German astronomer, on the outside of the University buildings at Königsberg.

The *Nationalités* of Turin states that the Sardinian fortifications on the banks of the Po are exciting great admiration. An extent of upwards of thirty-two kilometres has been fortified, including twelve at Piacenza, and six at Pavia.

At Chatham, on Wednesday week, Private John M'Cowen and John Taylor, an orderly, were decorated with silver medals, which, as well as a gratuity of £5 each, had been awarded them for long services and meritorious conduct.

According to Mr. Gilpin, there is a probability of our being favoured with a Reform Bill next Session. The measure, says the hon. gentleman, will be similar in its general provisions to the bill introduced last Session, but "with some modifications."

The 1st Hants (Bitterne), 2nd Hants (Portsmouth), and the 3rd Hants Artillery Volunteer Corps are now formed into one brigade for Administrative purposes, under the title of the 1st Administrative Brigade of the county of Hants.

By permission of the War Department, the whole of the workmen employed at the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, will be allowed three clear days' holiday at Christmas—viz., Monday, Christmas Day, and Wednesday—the extra time allowed to be made up by working over hours.

An important step towards the restoration of order in Upper Italy has been taken by the organisation of the Mobilised National Guard. The project of the Minister Minghetti for administrative decentralisation is also highly approved by the Naples journals.

The Municipality of Naples have decreed a statue to General Garibaldi, to be erected in one of the public squares, to be called after him. It has also decreed medals of honour to those of the National Guard who have distinguished themselves during the late memorable events.

The Right Rev. George Trevor Spencer, D.D., some time Lord Bishop of Madras, was formally installed as Chancellor in the Cathedral yesterday week. At the same time the Rev. F. G. Blomfield, M.A. (son of the late Bishop of London), was installed as an honorary Canon.

General Dunne, Garibaldi's aide-de-camp in all his campaigns in Sicily and Naples, was shot at Naples, on the 7th inst., by a man said to be a Sicilian, instigated thereto by the General, having known him to be a coward, interfering with his promotion. At the last accounts the gallant General was still alive.

*La Gazette de Savoie* reports progress of the great Subalpine Tunnel, which steadily advances, while above ground such other mighty enterprises proceed. On the south side of Cenis, at the Bardonneche aperture, the bore vaulted over is 725 metres long. At the north entry, near Modane, the vaulted passage counts 520 metres, steam perforators being at work in both.

Her Majesty's Emigration Commissioners chartered, on the 13th inst., the *Nile*, of 716 tons, belonging to Mr. Duncan Dunbar, of London, to sail from Plymouth for Sydney, New South Wales, at £16 12s. 6d. per statute adult; to be ready for the reception of passengers on such day as the commissioners may appoint between the 10th and 20th of January.

A murderous attack was made, on the 3rd of November, on Mr. Charles Bannerman, the editor and proprietor of the *West African Herald*. The assailants were Joseph Adams, a trader, and several of his slaves. They were brought up at Cape Coast, and sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labour.

A St. Petersburg letter states that the Russian Government is taking measures to repeople the Crimea, and have already sent there a good many families from the government of Koursk. The colonisation of the country on the Amoor is also advancing, 230 peasant families having been sent there during August from the governments of Tambow, Orel, and Woronesch.

A meeting was held at the Hope Hall, Liverpool, yesterday week, the Lord Bishop of Chester presiding, at which it was agreed to engraft upon the existing society for the "Home-teaching of the Blind," the establishment of a saleroom were the produce of blind persons' labour could be disposed of, and a workshop for the employment of the blind. Already nearly £1000 has been raised for this object in Liverpool.

The new Hillsea lines for the defence of Portsmouth, its harbour, dockyard, and arsenals, from the attack of an enemy landward, have made considerable progress during the past summer, and the completion of the inner or main line is now being pushed forward with great vigour, 1500 men being at this time employed in their construction, 500 in laying material, and 1000 in preparing it.

EARLY HOME OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, ELIZABETH TOWN, KENTUCKY.—FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY S. ALSCHULER, CHICAGO.

THE father of Abraham Lincoln was thrown upon his own resources while yet a child. Travelling from place to place, working wherever he could find employment, he grew up literally without education. He finally settled in Hardin County, Kentucky, where, in 1806, he was married to Nancy Hanks. The fruits of this union were a daughter and two sons. One of the latter died in infancy; the daughter died later in life. Abraham Lincoln was born February 12, 1809. It would be difficult to conceive of more unpromising circumstances than those under which he was ushered into life. His parents were poor and uneducated. They were under the social ban which slavery always entails upon poverty; and their habitation was in harmony with their broken fortunes. We give above an Engraving of the early home of the President Elect of the United States.

## CHESS.

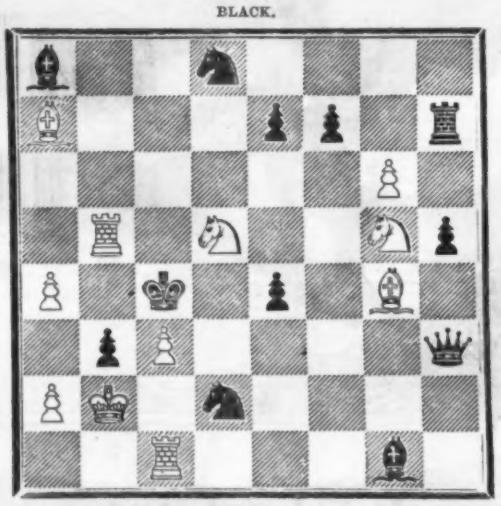
### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Our customary replies to Chess Correspondents are postponed for want of space until next week.

### PROBLEM NO. 378.

By Mr. J. GILBERT.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White, playing first, mates in four moves.

### CHESS IN JERSEY.

An instructive example of the Sicilian Game played by correspondence between Messrs. KEMPE and JACKSON.

(*Sicilian Opening.*)

| WHITE (Mr. K.) | BLACK (Mr. J.) |
|---|---|
| 1. P to K 4th | P to Q B 4th |
| 2. P to Q 4th | P takes P |
| 3. Kt to K B 3rd | Kt to Q B 3rd |
| 4. Kt takes P | P to K 3rd |
| (We prefer here—4. P to K 4th, though it must be admitted that, even in that case, Black has a somewhat confined game.) | |
| 5. Kt to Q Kt 5th | P to Q R 3rd |
| 6. Kt to Q 6th (ch) | B takes Kt |
| 7. Q takes B | Q to Q R 4th (ch) |
| (Less advisable than K Kt to K 2nd, perhaps.) | |
| 8. Q B to Q 2nd | Q to K 4th |
| 9. Q takes Q | Kt takes Q |
| 10. Q B to Q B 3rd | |
| (This sadly hampers Black's movements, and is decidedly better play than the more attacking move 10. P to K B 4th.) | |
| 10. | P to K B 3rd |
| 11. P to K B 4th | Q Kt to K Kt 5th |
| 12. K B to Q 3rd | K Kt to K 2nd |
| 13. P to K R 3rd | Q Kt to K R 3rd |
| 14. Kt to Q 2nd | Castles |
| 15. P to K Kt 4th | |
| (The opening has been extremely well conducted by White hitherto, and the freedom of his position contrasts very favourably with the transcale of Black.) | |
| 15. | Q Kt to K B 2nd |
| 16. Castles on Q's side | Q Kt to Q sq |
| 17. Q B to Q Kt 4th | Q Kt to Q B 3rd |
| (The impolicy of Black's 7th move is forcibly proved by the fact of this Kt having made six moves with the barren result of returning to the very square he occupied on first coming into action.) | |
| 18. Q B to Q 6th | P to Q Kt 4th |
| 19. P to K 5th | |
| (White's object in advancing this Pawn was to post his Bishop on the K 4th square: it may be doubted, however, whether the step was not a little premature.) | |
| 19. | P takes P |
| 20. P takes P | B to Q Kt 2nd |
| 21. K B to K 4th | R to K B 2nd |
| 22. Kt to K B 3rd | Q Kt to Q R 4th |
| (This is not a good move, but Black has scant choice just now. If he had attempted to keep out the adverse Kt, by playing 22. P to K R 3rd, his opponent would have retorted with 23. P to K Kt 5th, &c.) | |
| 23. B takes B | Q Kt takes B |
| 24. Kt to K Kt 5th | Q Kt takes B |
| 25. P takes Kt | |
| (He might have gained an equal advantage, at least, by capturing this Kt with his Q's Rook, *e.g.*:— | |
| 25. Q R takes Kt | K R to K B 7th |
| 26. Q R takes Q P | Kt to K Kt 3rd |
| 27. Kt takes K P, &c.) | |
| 25. | Kt to Q 4th |
| 26. Kt takes R | K takes Kt |
| 27. K R to K B sq (ch) | K to Kt 3rd |
| 28. K R to K B 3rd | B to Q B sq |
| 29. P to Q B 3rd | B to Q B 3rd |
| 30. P to K R 4th | P to K R 3rd |
| 31. P to K R 5th (ch) | K to R 2nd |
| 32. P to K Kt 5th | P takes P |
| 33. K R to K Kt 3rd | K to R 3rd |
| 34. Q R to K Kt sq | Kt to K B 3rd |
| 35. K R takes P | Kt takes K R P |
| 36. K R to Kt 6th (ch) | K to R 2nd |
| 37. K R takes K P | |
| (Finely played.) | |
| 37. | to Q Kt 3rd |
| (If 37. P takes R, then followed:— 38. P to Q 7th, B to Q 3rd, 39. R to Q sq, and White wins with ease.) | |
| 38. K R to K 7th | |
| (K R to K 5th looks a better move.) | |
| 38. | R takes P |
| 39. Q R to Q sq | R takes R (ch) |
| 40. K takes R | Kt to K B 3rd |
| 41. P to Q Kt 3rd | K to Kt sq |
| 42. P to Q B 4th | P takes P |
| 43. P takes P | K to B sq |
| 44. R to K 5th | Kt to K sq |
| 45. K to Q 2nd | Kt to Q 3rd |
| 46. K to Q 3rd | Kt to Q Kt 2nd |
| 47. R to K 2nd | K to B 2nd |
| 48. R to Q Kt 2nd | Kt to Q sq |
| 49. K to Q 4th | K to K 3rd |
| 50. K to Q 5th | Kt to Q B 3rd |
| 51. R to K Kt 2nd | K to B 3rd |
| 52. K to Q 6th | |

And, after a few more moves, Black resigned.

## SCIENTIFIC NEWS.

GUANO.—The eminent agricultural chemist, Boussingault, has just laid before the French Academy of Sciences a portion of a memoir on the position and qualities of guano in the isles and coasts of the Pacific Ocean. In conclusion he states that the present great commercial advantages derived from the diffusion of fossil fertilising matters is due to the observation of the English geologist Buckland, and to the analyses of the French chemist Berthier. Guano is now procured from the isles of the Pacific Ocean, the Carribean Sea, and the Gulf of Mexico, and from the coasts of Africa and Australia.

ROYAL SOCIETY.—A new part of the *Philosophical Transactions* has been issued lately. It includes profound mathematical papers by Professor Donkin, of Oxford, and by Messrs. A. Cayley and W. Spottiswoode; three papers on metallic alloys, considered in respect to their electric conducting power and specific gravity, by Dr. A. Matthiessen; a paper on the theory of sound, by the Rev. S. Earnshaw; and a paper on the resin of the ficus rubiginosa, &c., by Drs. Warren Delarue and H. Müller. Of some of the other papers we shall give a separate notice.

THE IRONSTONE DISTRICTS OF CLEVELAND form the subject of a remarkable geological treatise just published by Mr. James Bewick. It is accompanied by fine coloured diagrams of sections and a large map. The vast importance of the Cleveland ironfield, which appears destined to exert a very great influence on the iron trade of the kingdom, has impelled Mr. Bewick to his valuable labour, which will doubtless be fully appreciated by those interested in the subject. Some observations on ironstone-mining are appended to the treatise.

OZONE.—Dr. T. Andrews, and Mr. P. Tait, of Belfast, have published in the new part of the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* an account of their continued researches on ozone (the substance discovered by Schönbein, formed by the action of the electric spark on oxygen gas), especially as to its volumetric relations, to which is appended an account of the effects of the action of the electric discharge on hydrogen, nitrogen, cyanogen, and other gases. These gentlemen are still continuing their inquiries into the nature of ozone, which it is hoped will tend to throw more light on this mysterious substance.

THE GEOLOGY OF BOLIVIA, &C.—A paper on this subject by Mr. D. Forbes was read lately at a meeting of the Geological Society. The great Bolivian plateau, with an average elevation of fourteen or fifteen thousand feet above the level of the sea, consists of great gravel plains composed of sand, saline formations, oolitic débris, volcanic tuff, and scoriæ, including an accumulation of clays, gravel, shingle, and boulders, immense at some places, being at La Paz more than 1600 feet thick. Fresh-water ponds are found at a height of 14,000 feet. Silurian rocks (perhaps 15,000 feet thick) are well developed over an area of from 80,000 to 100,000 miles of mountain country, including the highest mountains of South America, and giving rise to the great river Amazon, &c. At the same meeting some remarks were made by Professor Huxley and Mr. J. Salt on some Bolivian fossils brought over by Mr. Forbes.

THEORY OF COLOURS.—In the new part of the *Philosophical Transactions* is a paper by Professor J. Clerk Maxwell, of King's College, on the theory of compound colours, and the relations of the colours of the spectrum. The professor gives, first, a history of the theory, with especial reference to the researches of Newton, Young, Brewster, Grassman, and Helmholtz; an account of his own experiments follows, with a reduction of his observations. He gives as the results the following among other general conclusions:—The three primary colours in the spectrum are red, green, and blue; by the mixture of these, colours chromatically identical with the other colours of the spectrum may be produced—the orange and yellow are equivalent to mixtures of red and green, which seems to put an end to the pretension of yellow to be considered a primary colour; and the extreme ends of the spectrum (very feeble) are probably equal to mixtures of red and blue.

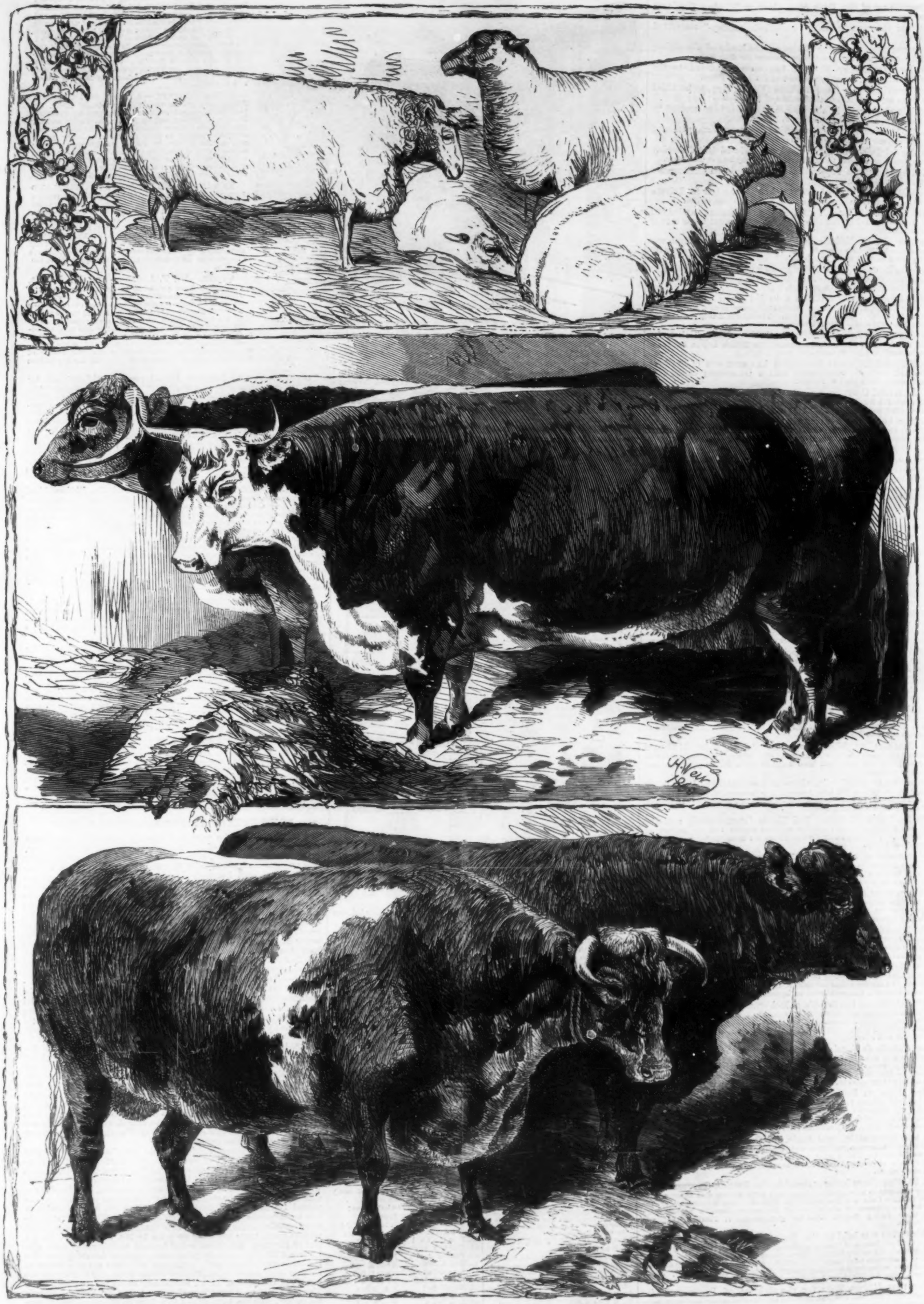
GEOGRAPHY OF GREECE.—M. Peytier has sent to the French Academy a memoir on this subject, giving an account of the measures which have been taken, at the instance of the French Government, for the preparation of a new map of the Morea. The measurements were made by the brigade of the French Army during its occupation of the country.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND FLUORESCENCE.—At the last monthly meeting of the members of the Royal Institution Professor Faraday exhibited photographs of fluorescent substances which had been prepared by Dr. J. H. Gladstone. He reminded the members present of experiments they had seen in that theatre showing that certain bodies, as bisulphate of quinine, emit a beautiful bluish light when they are exposed to the most refrangible rays of the spectrum, and are also phosphorescent. Several of these are white or colourless to look at under ordinary circumstances; but it had occurred to Dr. Gladstone that on account of their lowering the refrangibility of the chemical rays they would perhaps not produce so great a photographic effect as other white substances. He had, therefore drawn various devices in quinine salt, esculine from horse-chestnut bark, comenamate of potash, and other fluorescent substances on white paper, and had had the apparently white sheet photographed. The devices all came out dark, as was seen in the specimen exhibited; and, more than that, on a sheet of paper coloured blue with cobalt were fixed letters cut out of white paper and steeped in the fluorescent solutions above mentioned. When this sheet was photographed the blue paper was found to have a much greater chemical effect than the white letters, which, therefore, appeared in the positive photograph dark on a light ground.

## PRIZE-TAKERS AT THE SMITHFIELD SHOW.

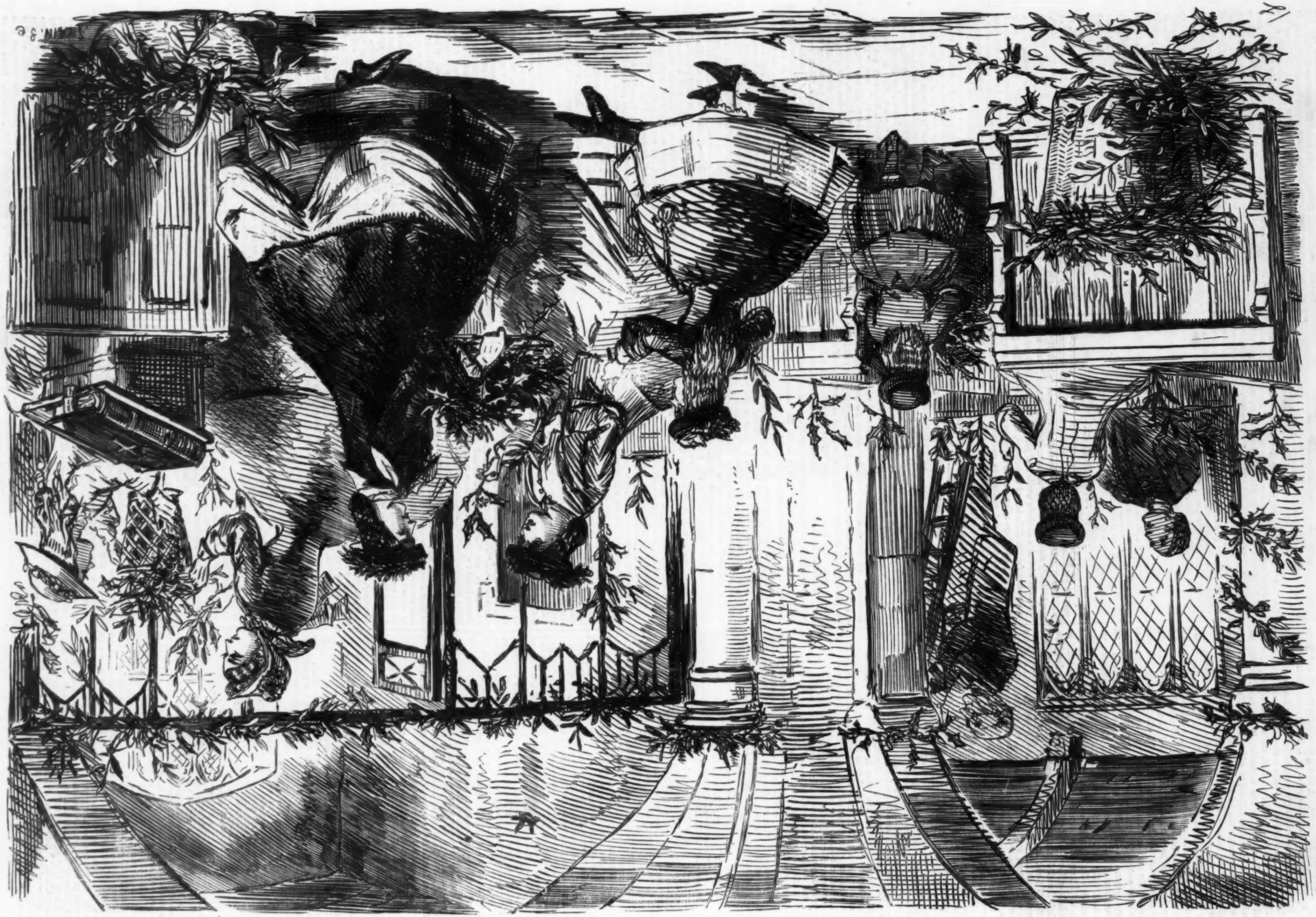
THE Hereford men who were so deservedly jubilant last year over the gold-medal victory of Mr. Shirley's wonderfully developed steer, in the ox and steer classes, gained a victory in a quarter where they least expected it, and astonished their shorthorn brethren not a little by beating Colonel Pennant's Birmingham prize-medal cow, in the gold-medal competition for cows or heifers. Mr. Hill's victrix on this occasion is called Lady Ash, and is by Sibdon from Lady Holly. She was bred by her owner at Golding Hall, Shrewsbury, and has had two calves during her five years and two months' pilgrimage. Cake, Simpson's food, turnips, and hay have been the principal elements of her dietary scale. Although she is very good, we have seen decidedly better Hereford cows on the same spot, and the fact of her having been beaten the week before at Birmingham confirms this belief. The field she had to meet for the gold medal, excluding Mr. Mogridge's Devon heifer, was also remarkably weak. Mr. Baker's (of Cottesmore) gold-medal ox was of a very superior stamp. Cottesmore, Burley-on-the-Hill, and the grazing farms round Oakham have long been celebrated for their fat-stock contributions to Baker-street, and this year they "outdid their former outdoings" by fairly distancing the Birmingham shorthorn winner, and all others, for first and second places. The pair belonged to the Earl of Gainsborough and his agent, both were by Snowdrop, both were three years and eight months old, and both had been fed on "cake, bean and barley meal, hay, turnips, and carrots." In the Scotch polled breeds, Mr. M'Combie's (of Tilly Tour, Aberdeen) ox well kept up the honour of the Scottish blacks; and it is rather remarkable that no other Scotch breeder exhibited in this class, but left the Norfolk, Kentish, and Suffolk graziers to fight it out with their capital champion. The longhorned cow of Mr. J. H. Burbery had no competitor whatever; and, in fact, except in two or three of the Midland counties, a longhorn is as rare as a rhinoceros. The present prizetaker came from The Chase, near Kenilworth, which, out of honour to the dun cow of Guy Earl of Warwick memory, retains the breed in its highest perfection.

The Cotswold winner which our Artist has selected is the property of Mr. Joseph Craddock, of Eastington, near Northleach. This long-wooled ewe is an excellent specimen of the "improved Cotswold," and its five competitors included one longwool from Hereford, a "true Cotswold," from the stock of William Cother; a Leicester, from Mr. Jordan, whose wethers won the gold medal at this place last year, and an "improved Leicester" from Burley-on-the-Hill, which Mr. Robert Smith first made famous by his Leicester lettings. Mr. Kent's pen of fat Southdown wethers did the fullest justice to the blood which his Grace reared with so much care; grudging no price to Mr. Jonas Webb for the hire of his tups. His Grace looked forward to this competition with his friend Mr. Rigden as the great turning-point of his sheep year. His last essay was his most unfortunate one, as he was not only beaten in the first wether class by Mr. Rigden, but he could not even try for the second, in consequence of his sheep being above the stipulated 200lb. This year no sheep came from Goodwood; but Mr. Kent, his Grace's old trainer, who has been settled in a farm on the estate, boldly confronted Mr. Rigden and beat him in this class. Both first and second pens were very good, and more attention seems to have been paid to the shoulders—a point on which these sheep have always been rather deficient in Sussex.



Extra Stock, No. 209.—Mr. Craddock's Improved Cotswold.
Class 18, No. 109.—Mr. Barbery's Longhorned Cow.
Class 10, No. 74.—Mr. Baker's Shorthorned Ox.
Class 35, No. 231.—Mr. Kent's Southdown.
Class 9, No. 47.—Mr. Hill's Hereford Cow.
Class 21, No. 134.—Mr. M'Combie's Scotch Polled Ox.

PRIZE ANIMALS OF THE SMITHFIELD CLUB CATTLE SHOW.



"THE FONT AND THE FLOWERS."—DRAWN BY J. LEECH.—SEE PAGE 614.

## *LITERATURE.*

### ILLUSTRATED BOOKS.

THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS. A new Edition, with Memoir and Notes, by GEORGE OFFOR. Illustrated by J. D. WATSON. Routledge.

It happens that beside this gorgeous edition of the famous allegory of John Bunyan there lies on our table a copy of the work published in 1775, which was "printed for P. Oriel, stationer, in Aldersgate-street; and J. W. Piercy, printer and bookseller, in Coventry." This, too, contains a series of illustrations, of which it can only be said that if the subject-matter of the book was intended to be purely comic no better assistance towards the attainment of that end could have been devised than the engravings which it contains. Contrasting this quaint old volume with the last issue of "The Pilgrim's Progress"—nearly a century having intervened between the two editions—one cannot but see a remarkable testimony to the intrinsic value of the book. At this day there is to be found an enthusiastic and careful editor of the fine old prose poem of Bunyan, and an artist who, catching the very spirit of the time in which it was produced, has given us pictures of the men and women created by the author just such as they must have appeared to his mind's eye at the age in which he lived. The personages of the book, as they appear in Mr. Watson's pictures, are clothed in the garb of the period at which Bunyan wrote; and the characteristics of each have been portrayed with singular point and effect. Witness, for instance, the portraits—that is the best word we can find for them—of Mr. Worldly Wiseman, Lady Feigning's daughter, Atheist, and Ignorance; while Greatheart, as he appears in Mr. Watson's ideal, is the very type of a Puritan soldier; nor are the less romantic portions of the illustrations less to be commended; they are full of purpose, and bear with them the exact image of the text. Several of them we have transferred in engravings to our columns. The first is the representation of Christian as he appears, knocking at the gate, in that earlier part of his pilgrimage whence the interest begins to grow so strong. The next illustrates the point where Christian, having long assumed his suit of armour, in company with Hopeful, pauses at the stile which leads to By-path Meadow, and so takes them out of the way, for a space, of the road which leads to the Celestial Gate. The third is taken from the description of the flower-offering, by the children inhabitants of the realms of the Celestial King, "who would go into the King's gardens, and gather nosegays for the Pilgrims, and bring them to them with much affection!"

Of course, the pictorial character of the edition of "The Pilgrim's Progress" is intended as its chief claim to attention. But there have been great pains and care expended on the editorial department of that which is confessedly an English classic. The book is reproduced mainly, if not entirely, in the form in which it was published by Bunyan himself; while a series of notes have been added which tend to explain and elucidate the text in a manner which avoids that explanation for explanation's sake which is often fatal to what we may call the bloom of poetry or allegory, and brings it down to the dead level of common ideas. The subject-matter of the notes is gleaned from Bunyan's other works, a list of which—sixty-one in number—is subjoined, and to them due reference is made. In short, there is every mark that the editing of the work has been a labour of love, and has been executed by one who has a thorough understanding of the literature of the time, and is equally imbued with the principles which then began to prevail. For the rest, the skill of the printer, paper-maker, binder, and decorator has been lavishly brought into play to render the accessories of the volume as beautiful as its text is valuable and interesting.

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POETS' WIT AND HUMOUR. Selected by W. H. WILLS. Illustrated with 100 Engravings from Drawings by Charles Bennett and George H. Thomas. Bell and Daldy.

Rich in purple, gold, and morocco leather, we have here a volume with regard to which the only regret we have is that it cannot address itself to the widest circle of purchasers. It contains some eighty or ninety poems, all of the humorous vein, beginning with Chaucer's "Miller of Trumpington," and ranging through Sir Thomas Wyatt, Davenant, Suckling, Milton, Cowley, Butler, Marvel, D'Urfey, Guy, Pope, Prior, Swift, Fielding, Goldsmith, Sheridan, Peter Pindar, Canning, Southey, Lamb, Hood, Sidney Smith, Barham, Macaulay, and including, amongst many others, such men of our time as Thackeray, Lover, and Lemon. A great number of the poems are old familiar friends, others are not so easy of recognition; and it will probably be new to some of us to find Dr. Johnson and Lord Macaulay, as well as grave, solid John Milton, appearing here in the comic vein. There is something incongruously amusing in the jingle of the great lexicographer's verse in the lines, entitled "Thirty-five." Lord Macaulay's contribution is "The Country Clergyman's Trip," a skit connected with the election for Cambridge University at the time of the agitation for Catholic Emancipation. We find also one or two translations. There is one from Fontaine, another from Francesco Redi, and others from Frederick Hagedorn, De Yriarte, and Charrin. But the gem amongst the translated portion is a version of "Vilikins and his Dinah," rendered into French by L. W. Desanges, a stanza or so of which we are tempted to extract, as follows:—

Sir Wilkins se promenait du jardin au fond,
Que voit-il!!! Sa Dinah morte sur le gazon,
Près d'elle git une coupe de poison tout froid,
Et une lettre qui dit qu'elle est morte pour Vilikins, je crois,
Chantant tural lul lural, &c.

Chœur de demoiselles mortes pour l'amour—chœur en grand silence:—
Tural lul lural, &c.

De mille baisers il couvre le cadavre cheri,
"Attens," dit-il, "Dinah, ton petit mari."
Il boit le poison, son âme part au galop,
Et Vilikins et Dinah n'occupent qu'un tombeau.

Tous les deux chantant en chœur un chœur en chantant,
Tural lul lural, &c.

Altogether, the range of this selection is very extended, and the taste and humour which have guided it are everywhere apparent. The illustrations are in perfect keeping with the intention of the book. They are all admirably conceived and as admirably executed. We have engraved in our pages a sketch illustrating the passage in John Philip's poem of "The Splendid Shilling," which runs thus:—

But I, whom griping penury surrounds,
And hunger, sure attendant upon want,
With scanty offals and small acid tiff
(Wretched repast!) my meagre corpse sustain,
Then solitary walk, or doze at home
In garret vile, and with a warming puff
Regale chill'd fingers, or from tube as black
As winter-chimney or well-polish'd jet
Exhale mundungus, ill-perfuming scent!

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THE BOY'S BOOK OF BALLADS. Illustrated with Sixteen Engravings from Drawings by JOHN GILBERT. Bell and Daldy.

It is to be hoped that certain satirical essays on the peculiarly unboylike nature of the boyhood of the present day which have appeared recently in a well-known periodical are exaggerated; for, unless that be the case, we do not see any chance of the success of this little volume. To that class of our youth, which still believes in Robin Hood, and Valentine and Orson, and the like, the book is addressed, and we trust it will meet with the acceptation it deserves. The time has been when the famous ballad-story of "Adam Bell," "Clym of the Clough," and "William of Cloudesley," which we are here glad to meet with once more, was deemed by us one of the most thrilling romances of its school. Its resurrection now proves that this feeling is not unshared by those to whose care the present selection was committed. The first poem in the series attracts at once, for it is that famous one of "Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne." Then we welcome, among others, "Chevy Chase," "Robin Hood and the Curtal Friar," "The King and the Miller of Mansfield," and so on. Commend us, however, to the right doleful story of the "Brave Lord Willoughby," who fought that famous battle in Flanders on (uncertain) 15th of July, and whose cry of—

Stand to it, noble pikemen,
And look you round about:
And shoot you right, you bowmen,
And we will keep them out:
You musket and calliver* men
Do you prove true to me,
I'll be the foremost man in fight,
Says brave Lord Willoughbey,

has been quoted more than once by Scott. We confess to not having been previously acquainted with the tale of "Sir Andrew Barton," but we can say of it that it is in capital accordance with the rest of the collection, which is specially good in every respect. Of the romantic characteristics of John Gilbert's illustrations it is of course unnecessary to say a word, except that we think we see particular marks of care and finish in the details of each picture. We engrave a very spirited specimen of the illustrations, one which pertains to the ballad of "Robin Hood and the Curtal Friar," and the gist of which is to be found in the following lines:—

The friar took Robin Hood on his back,
Deep water he did bestride,
And spake neither good word nor bad
Till he came to the other side.

Lightly leap'd Robin off the friar's back;
The friar said to him again,
"Carry me over the water, fine fellow,
Or it shall breed thee pain."

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### JUVENILE BOOKS.

From year to year there is to be observed a marked attention on the part of publishers to a department of literature the importance of which was recognised almost before that epoch at which it was emphatically stated that the "schoolmaster was abroad;" and when the man who uttered those words had placed himself at the head of a movement for the diffusion of knowledge, which, happily, has gone on enlarging its sphere to an extent which perhaps the most sanguine of its originators did not venture to contemplate. In that section of book-writing which addresses itself especially to the young no pains have been spared to render the works issued attractive in every sense of the term. A class of authors devoting themselves to this duty has arisen, and their province is often subjected to a friendly invasion from writers who are accustomed chiefly to address themselves to children of larger growth. Everything which artistic skill and decorative taste can contribute to the accessories of juvenile books has been lavishly bestowed upon their getting up; and the rude, coloured cuts, and the flimsy paper covers of the olden time have given way to illustrations by artists of reputation, while the delicate craft of the printer, papermaker, and binder, has been invoked with an unsparing liberality. Of course, at this particular season the tree of knowledge is in full bearing; the crop is a plentiful and a goodly one; and it is our pleasing task to direct attention to as much of the product as we possibly can. We have already put before our readers a notice of many of the books for the young which are being issued just at this moment; and this particular number of our Journal would be wanting in one of its acknowledged features if it did not contain its proper quantum of juvenile literature.

The first book which we take from a somewhat large array before us is "The Carewes: A Tale of the Civil Wars." By Mary Gillies. (Kent and Co.) The period of which it treats is the year 1637, the twelfth of the reign of King Charles I., and the opening scene is laid not far from the skirts of Windsor Forest, where stood a fine old hall belonging to a branch of the ancient family of Carewe. The author, in describing the lives and adventures of the characters in the tale has, guided by the best authorities, given an admirable picture of the customs and manners of the time, and has endeavoured to be strictly accurate in every circumstance touching on historical events. Beyond this there is a purpose in the book, which is to give some idea, capable of being understood by young readers, of the pure motives, the brave struggles, and the noble deeds of those great men to whom our country owes its present liberty under a Constitutional Government. As a specimen of the mode in which description of habits and manners is interwoven with the narrative, we might direct attention to the chapter headed "London in 1639." For the rest, the book is a romance, without any of the objectionable features which some of the elders of families might attach to romance; and it is written in a style the quaintness of which is in keeping with its main characteristics. When it is added that it contains twenty-four illustrations by Birket Foster, the case in its favour may be said to be complete.——We next come upon "The Illustrated Boy's Own Story-book" (Ward and Lock). This is a volume "for summer days and winter nights, especially adapted for the encouragement, amusement, and recreation of youth, at school or at home." With some art, the contents are so varied as to fit this book for a family of children, beginning with, say, the well-grown boy who is beginning to find an interest in biography and history and descending by a *diminuendo* scale to the little ones, who would be charmed with "The Adventures of a Donkey." The first story is devoted to the "Boyhood of Bertrand du Guesclin," that famous Breton knight whose fame was known and whose name was honoured by all nations, Christian and Saracen; but who was, as a boy, a little, thick-necked, short-bodied, brown-faced, snub-nosed, long-eared, round-shouldered, bullet-headed, beetle-browed urchin, a son whom his parents could neither chasten nor endure—the very plague and terror of their lives, an eyesore to themselves and a nuisance to their neighbours—unruly and disobedient at home, and the fomenter of all kinds of discord abroad—sorry materials out of which was to spring the good knight and true. Perhaps many persons besides children will be glad to read the story of "A Great Man who was once a Cobbler;" and to learn something of the childhood of Winckelman of Steindale, in Germany. There are in the work ten stories; and it is crowded with wood engravings from designs by Bertall, Foulquier, Castelli, &c.

Last year Mr. J. H. Pepper, formerly Professor of Chemistry at the Polytechnic Institution, published a work entitled "The Boy's Playbook of Science," which was so well received that it has naturally encouraged him to endeavour to complete his popular sketches not only of the great and imponderable powers of nature called gravitation, cohesion, chemical affinity, heat, light, electricity, and magnetism, but likewise to grapple with that very wide field of inquiry comprehended in the subject of "Mines and Metals." This he has done in a volume entitled "The Playbook of Metals" (Routledge). This includes personal narratives of visits to coal, lead, copper, and tin mines, with a large number of interesting experiments relating to alchemy and the chemistry of the fifty metallic elements, a catalogue of the names of which we will not venture here to insert. Besides an introduction, there are chapters devoted to coal mines, the art of alchemy, the preface to the sciences of chemistry and metallurgy, the metals and their combinations, and chapters, or parts of chapters, devoted to the aforesaid fifty metals, which include such unwonted names to the general reader as baricum, cadmium, calcium, cerium, chromium, donarium, didymium, erbium, glucinum, ilmenium, iridium, lanthanium, lithium, &c. The subjects are all treated in that easy familiar manner which the author's experience as a lecturer has rendered natural to him, so that the least informed and instructed reader can understand what is brought before him, and the subject-matter is illustrated with three hundred engravings. Here is material for the formation of any given number of young metallurgists. It is an excellent manual, and as amusing as any storybook.——In this nautical country of ours boy literature would be terribly incomplete without a due admixture of seagoing books. To this branch of authorship Mr. W. H. Kingston is a regular contributor, and he now addresses his juvenile patrons in "The Boy's own Book of Boats" (Sampson Low, and Son). The object of the work has been to give its young readers an account of the vessels and boats of every rig and size to be found floating on the waters in every part of the world. It is written for those who wish really to gain useful information about vessels, and a sketch of the existing state of naval architecture. With this view there are instructions given for cutting out a boat in the first instance, and the subject-matter gradually rises to minute directions as to the construction of every part of vessels of every class, including their sails. A threedecker is dissected and put together, as well as the *Mersey* frigate, one of the most recently-improved specimens of her class in the British Navy, which has stood the test of several heavy gales in the Channel in a manner which fully proves her efficiency as a man-of-war, she being the only ship afloat which could steam at full speed against a gale with any chance of success, and which is said to be actually capable of contending with a whole fleet of the old line-of-battle ships which Howe, Jervis, and Nelson led to victory. We also learn a great deal about South Sea whalers, Dutch galliots, Arab dows, outrigger canoes, Chinese junks, Esquimaux canoes, American river steamers, Peruvian balsas, the flying proas of the Ladrone islands, and the canoes of the Feejee islanders. All this is done—accompanied be it said by illustrations very well executed, and copious diagrams—not with the intention of inducing any of the readers of the book to turn sailors, but with the object of affording to them that knowledge of nautical affairs which every well-educated Englishman ought more or less to possess. If the subjects here treated are mastered, the object in view will have been as nearly as possible attained.

It will not probably be thought inconsistent with the purpose of this notice of works of a special description to introduce a book which, rich in decoration and abounding in illustrations, bears the title of "Shakspere, his Birth-place and its Neighbourhood," which has been produced by Mr. John R. Wise, illustrated by W. J. Linton, and published by Smith and Elder. Our great poet, besides being for all time, in many respects may be said to be for all ages, in the sense of years. We know of an experiment, tried by a father of a family, to read, with a certain degree of excision and omission, one or two of the plays of Shakspeare to some very young children, and the result was remarkable enough. The gist of the stories were caught at once, and much of the poetry appreciated, if not wholly for the sense, yet for the sound, which conveyed unquestionable pleasure to the ideal part of their minds. But, apart from the question whether children are capable of dealing with the works of Shakspeare, there can be no doubt that many who enter into the category of youthful readers will find abundant interest in the work before us, although it is not particularly addressed to them. The writer of the book does not pretend that its aim is very high; but, he says, that if it will in some measure take away the reproach of meagreness from the handbooks to Stratford-on-Avon, and throw more light on the text of Shakspeare, by giving the reader a better idea of the land where the poet lived, he will be very well content. The introductory portion of the work is, as we think, happy in its vein, and leads up well to the actual matter which succeeds. This embraces descriptions of Stratford, of the house where Shakspeare was born, the parish church, the Grammar School, the Chapel of the Guild, the Chamberlain's books and private manuscripts at Straford, Charlecote Park, Welcombe and Smitterfield, Shottery, the Avon, Luddington and Welford, "Piping Pebworth" and "Dancing Marston" (embalmed under those titles in the well-known quatrain of the poet), Warwickshire Orchards and Harvest Homes, the Provincialisms of Shakspeare, and a glossary of words still used in Warwickshire to be found in his works. It is in all respects a very pleasant, although a very unpretending, book.——Recurring to that part of our notice which may be called the juvenile proper, we light upon "Holidays with Hobgoblins, or Talk of Strange Things," by Dudley Costello (J. C. Hotten). This is a series of stories, pitched in accordance with the title of the book, of the nature and character of which an idea may be gathered when it is stated that among the headings are such as "Shaving a Ghost," "The Ghost of Pit Pond," "The Haunted House near Hampstead." There is, however, an infusion of somewhat more solid stuff in the relations regarding "Superstitions and Traditions," "Monsters," "Alchemy and Gunpowder," &c. There is a narrative anent Mother Shipton of prophetic notoriety; and we learn something of the history of such fanciful creatures as dragons, griffins, and salamanders; while the actual and veritable is introduced in dissertations on crabs and lobsters. There is more besides all this—the variety which is crowded into some 300 small pages being infinite. The illustrations are numerous, and, be it well marked and noted, are by George Cruikshank, and are in his best style. The frontispiece was designed and etched expressly for this work, the other pictures were drawn by the artist some years ago, but are admirably adapted to the subjects in hand, and they are full of humour and spirit.

The course of these notices turns now into fairy land or rather into fairylore. Mr. Henry Morley favours the youthful public with a book of fairy tales entitled "Oberon's Horn." The stories are twelve in number, ten of which are quite new, while two, severally headed "Adventures in Switzerland" and "The King of the Hearth," appeared ten years ago in *Household Words*. In this collection the spirit of the old storytelling has been caught, and the style is in keeping with it. Mr. C. H. Bennett contributes a series of appropriate illustrations. "Little Ella and the Fire-King" (Edmonton and Douglas, Edinburgh) is essentially a child's book, which Mr. Henry Warren has done his best to beautify. To each of the tales the author, who writes under the initials "M. W." has endeavoured to affix a simple moral suited to the understandings of very young readers: the book is excellent of its class. The author of "Kathie Brande," who subscribes herself "Holme Lee," renders her offering to the season in the shape of "Legends from Fairyland." (Smith and Elder). Her name will be at once a guarantee for the quality of her little book, which narrates the history of Prince Glee and Princess Trill, the cruel persecutions and condign punishment of Aunt Spite, the adventures of the great Tuflongo, and the story of the black cap in the giant's well in a very enticing manner; while eight illustrations by H. Sanderson—very humourous indeed—lend their aid to the completeness of the volume. When it is stated that the title-page of a book, called "Fairy-Land; or, Recreation for the Rising Generation" (Henry Lea), informs us that it is the composition of the late Thomas and Jane Hood, their Son, and Daughter, enough has probably been said as its recommendation, except the addition that the very artistic illustrations are the production of Thomas Hood, junior. But a brief extract from the introduction, written by Mrs. Freeling Broderip, will probably not be without interest. It is stated that this "little volume of prose and verse was compiled several years ago, and was destined for publication by our father and mother. It is, in fact, the collection of 'Childish Articles,' written for the 'rising generation,' which is alluded to in pp. 179 196 of the second volume of the 'Memorials of Thomas Hood,' lately published. Nearly every one of its chapters has some recollection associated with it. Some of the tales were related to us when we were ill; when the little weary limbs were too weak to sit up, and the little eyes too dim and aching for us to read for ourselves. Then the petition of 'A story—only one little story!' was never refused by either of the tender parents who nursed and watched us so carefully. Several of these little stories are supplied from memory, as they were told to us in those happy evenings that will never be forgotten—evenings when the actual work needed for the day was over, and our dear father employed his few leisure moments by giving himself up to the amusement of his children. Then, in the dim twilight, by the flickering fire, we used to sit at his feet, and listen eagerly to tale, ballad, or history, according to the mood of the moment. Other stories are from the pen of our mother—that gentle friend of our childhood to whom we owe our first knowledge of all that is good and great. Through the whole course of a very troubled life hers was always the loving heart and hand, ready to add to the enjoyment and instruction of her children." In every sense this little volume will address itself to the feelings of the young. A book with "one hundred illustrations, designed by Alfred Crowquill," carries with it a very striking introduction. It is the happy fate of a volume called "Fairy Footsteps; or, Lessons from Legends" to possess this advantage. The tales range over an immense variety. There are long stories and short stories, German stories, Irish stories, and Eastern stories; all of them studded thick with sketches, humorous and grave, by the artist, who has never more successfully indulged his fancy, or taken more pains with the carrying out of his ideas. Again we find the same cunning hand illustrating, in colours, a volume of small-childish tales, and which bears the designation of "What Uncle Told Us" (Henry Lea). Our list closes with "The Christmas Tree," a book of instruction and amusement for all young people, profusely illustrated. It is the sixth yearly appearance of a volume under the same title, which is probably well known in the libraries of the young, and therefore it is only necessary to say that its contents are judiciously varied and its tone good.

* A kind of gun.

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| 2 Gravy Spoons | 10 | .. | 3 13 4 | 2 Gravy Spoons | 12 | .. | 4 0 0 |
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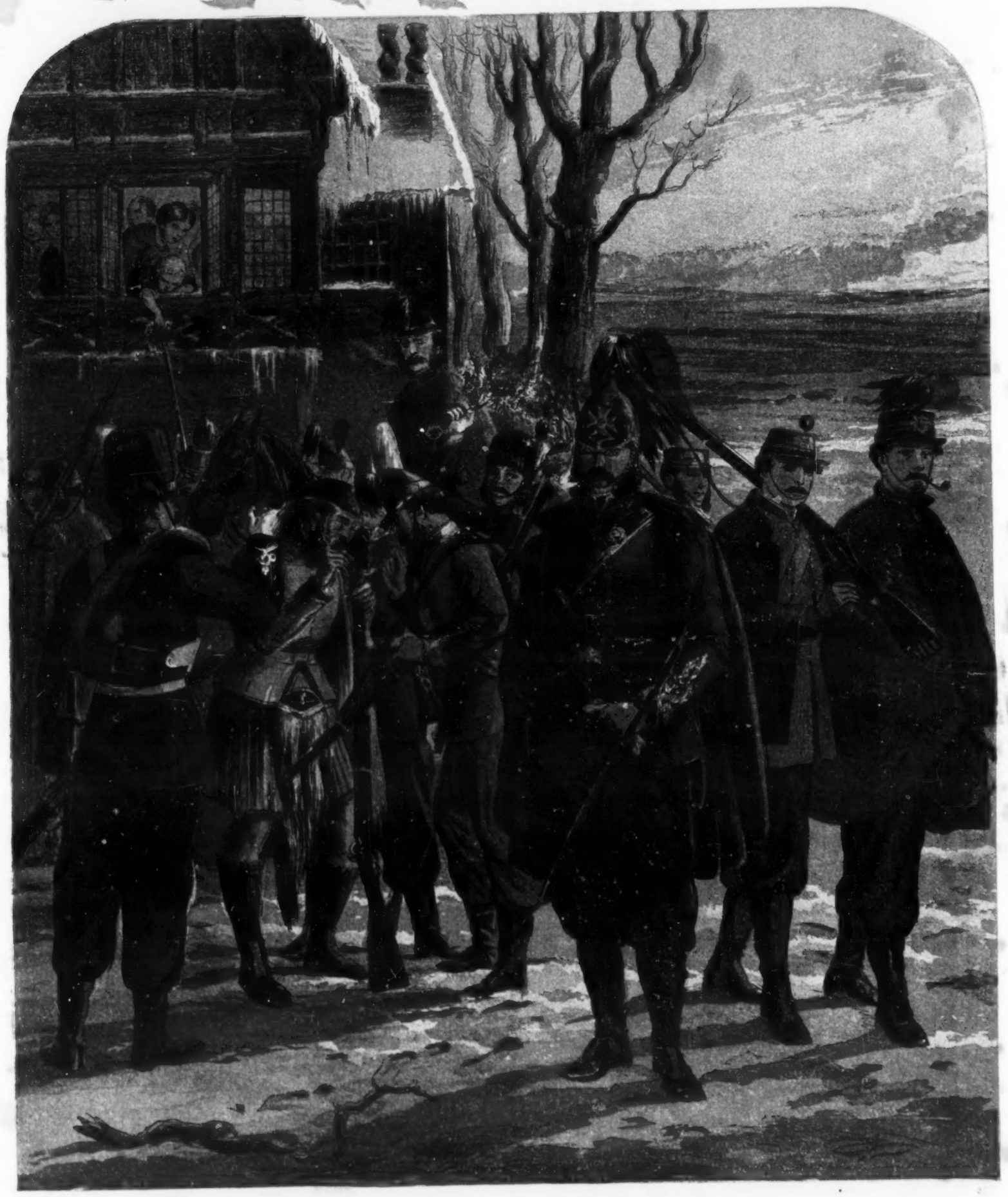

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